new masses

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APRIL 8, 1947

WHY THE BRITISH FEAR US

A REPORT FROM LONDON BY RICHARD O. BOYER

EUGENE DENNIS: WHAT THEY WOULDN'T LET ME SAY

I MEET THE GREEK GUERRILLAS

by GEORGE THOMAS, M.P.

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LISTEN TO THE RUMBLE

By Pat Collier, Jr.

Phoenixville, Pa.

You almost forget that there are men who lost their sight during the war. You read about them when they returned from overseas, but you thought while you read that it was bad, that it was a terrible life that they would have to lead, that you didn't know how you'd react to a thing like that. And then probably you turned to the rest of the news and forgot them.

What happened to them after they got to this country? What sort of orientation were they given to adjust them to their new lives? It was pretty simple, really. They were trained to walk, given lessons in Braille, braced psychologically for the world they would live in. Then they were discharged, to take up life as best they could.

A few of them, though, are still, for one reason or another, in the Army. This is about one of them at the Army's Valley Forge General Hospital at Phoenixville, Pa., just outside of Philadelphia. I don't know how he lost his sight. I don't know what outfit he was in. I don't even know his name.

When I first went to the hospital, I didn't quite know what to expect. What I found surprised me a little. The blind men are not particularly well liked by the people who have been around the hospital for any length of time. Patients, who have troubles of their own, and the short-staffed duty personnel tend to stay away from them because they're a pretty sour bunch. I guess they are compensating by asserting themselves. I don't know. But the talk among them is loud and abusive. They don't pull any punches in their speech, and they've managed to shock hell out of women visiting the hospital with their language. They are ready to bitch about anything at the top of their lungs.

The boys were eating in the patients' mess the evening of Truman's speech on Greece. There are two tables set aside for the blind men. Mess hall attendants get their orders and bring their chow to them. The rest of the patients, one thousand in all, pass through a cafeteria line.

There was plenty of talk about the speech that night, some pro, mostly con. Very few of the men were interested in seeing more guys end up in a hospital like this one. They all figured that it was a pretty serious thing. A few were using the old Army joke: "Next time I'll go so far back into the hills they'll never catch me."

The blind guys were talking too, talking rather more loudly than the other tables, increasing the din made by the conversations around the mess hall, the clash of plates and silver and the hubbub of the serving line.

Suddenly the tables near the blind boys quieted down. There was a sort of vacuum in all the noise. Everybody had turned around. They were watching one of the blind men.

He was on his feet and he had his cane in his hand. He was shouting, shouting and banging his cane against the table.

"What the hell do they want another war for? Who wants to fight it?" He had sweat on his forehead, and, oddly enough, on the part of his face which was disfigured. "What the hell do they want to fight for? Do they want some other poor son-of-a-bitch to get what I got? Do they want some other poor bastard to be blind, blind like me?

"I'll sit on a street corner and yell it at the poor bastards, 'Do you want to be blind?' "

He was still yelling when the corpsmen hustled him out of the mess hall. I could hear him all the way down the passageway. The last word I heard before they got him around the corner that leads to the ward was "blind!"

Pat Collier, Jr., is the pen name of a GI patient at Valley Forge General Hospital. NEW MASSES *invites its readers to contribute to its "Listen to the Rumble" with accounts of what they see and hear of the many signs of our time.*

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By RICHARD O. BOYER

LONDON IS LEERY

In the capital of a crumbling Empire, the people are worried about their dangerous dependence on Wall Street. An interview with Harry Pollitt.

London.

IF ENGLISHMEN of all classes have any common denominator these days it is fear of the United States. Their fear may flow from differing causes but nevertheless the Lombard Street broker and the Putney dock worker are alike convinced that it is American policy to convert Britain into an unofficial American colony. Many think, in addition, that before Great Britain can prosper at home her American-dominated foreign policy abroad must be changed. Here in this bomb-gutted capital of crumbling Empire, the great miscalculation of American foreign policy is more evident than at home. The world as a whole fears *us*, not Russia. The average Englishman fears not Stalin but the Republican Party and those who aid and abet it in the Democratic. It is American policy which keeps the Britisher on short rations, or so he believes, not Russian. *The Times* and the trade union leader, moreover, brace their followers for the coming American depression and both agree that it may drag the world into increasing ruin. There is agreement here in widely disparate circles that the American war scare is directed not so much at the Soviet Union as it is against American labor, American civil liberties and toward improving the American imperialist position the world over at the expense of the British.

In Great Britain, as in China, Greece, Latin America, the Philippines and indeed the whole world, domestic policy cannot be calculated without introducing the almost dominant factor of American imperialism. There is the anomaly here that those who most vociferously demand American monetary aid and who most obsequiously follow the American lead abroad are among the first to deplore privately the dependence they have worked for. The increasing number of Londoners who believe that domestic confusion cannot be overcome until the Anglo-American foreign policy is reversed point out that that policy is often more American than Anglo. They say that it is the hardened hostility of the Anglo-American policy toward the Soviet Union, its refusal to resume Big Three unity, that makes it difficult for Britain to liquidate her costly overseas commitments. The commitments are a constant financial drain that on one hand guarantees continued British economic dependence on the United States and on the other perpetuates the serious industrial manpower shortage here by making it impossible to reduce an army urgently needed in home industry. This is why many Englishmen declare that a primary condition of domestic prosperity is freedom from American domination and a return to the status of a truly independent nation.

Harry Pollitt, general secretary of the Communist Party, expressed this view, at least to a degree, in addressing the recent Nineteenth Congress of the Party held here in London. The Party is demanding the immediate reorganization of the Labor government, asking that those ministers seeking to compromise with monopoly and imperialism be dropped. Pollitt voiced the commonly-held fear that Britain will sink to further "dependence on American monopolist reaction."

"The Labor government's policy," he said, "of maintaining the old imperialist commitments beyond the economic strength and manpower of the country, relying on cheap, imported foreign labor and trying to solve the crisis without any real encroachment on the system of capitalist profit and privilege, is leading to disaster."

These were the alternatives, he said: "Either we reorganize the government—drastically change its policy, go forward along the path of great social and economic reorganization, breaking the power of monopoly, building up planned economy and establishing close cooperation with the Soviet Union, the new democracies, and the advancing colonial peoples; or—

"We sink to dependence on American monopolist reaction, surrender to the monopolies at home, succumb to our own immediate economic crisis, intensified by a depression spreading from America, and become engulfed in war as the outpost and vulnerable advance base of American reaction against European democracy."

IT SEEMS to me, after talking with a good many Londoners, that too many Britons agree with Pollitt to make it likely that England will ever be a quiescent advance base for American war against Europe. I talked, for example, to a dock worker near the East India Docks in London's bleak East End. Around us was a desert of

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bomb rubble thick with dry brown weeds and in summer, he said, a bright flower blossomed everywhere on the wreckage that had once been homes. He and his family were living in one of the long lines of barrack-like huts of corrugated sheet iron with curving convex tops that now house many of London's workers in the badly bombed areas near the Thames. I spoke of anti-Semitism in England and he said a bit tartly, "It isn't for you to worry about anti-Semitism. It's anti-Americanism you should worry about."

I talked, too, to a British archeologist who was showing me the scant remains of Roman Londinium. He paused long enough in his description of the sacking of London by Boadicea in 61 A.D. to observe that no foreigners since the Normans had held as tight a grip on British destiny as do the Americans now. I also spoke to a Labor MP from Scotland, who looked more like an evangelical preacher than a politician, and who said that many Laborites were worried over a Republican victory in 1948 and the effect that might have on a future British loan. He was afraid that political conditions might be tied to it that would slow or halt the nationalization of industry.

Even Conservatives fear American imperialism, I was told by a close wartime associate of Churchill. They feel that it is aiding them now only to eat them up later. There are some who wince a bit as they listen to the eternal American talk of war with the Soviet Union. They are well aware that behind such talk America imperialism is taking up positions all over the world that tend to push out British rather than Russian influence. Nor is Winston Churchill's talk of war unduly popular in Conservative circles, according to my informant. Even in his own party Churchill is regarded by many as an aged and crusty prima donna whose advice is more dangerous than practical. When he speaks in Parliament his words are heard for the entertainment of their rococo rhetoric rather than as a contribution to policy. He has become a monument, like Westminster Abbey. Only Americans think of him as still a considerable force. Only Truman and his Republican and poll-tax adherents follow the line of his Fulton, Missouri, speech. Here he is honored and disregarded. Partly because Bevin is sometimes charged with being one of Churchill's band of dwindling followers, the influence of the foreign secretary is increasingly on the wane, while the views of the dissident Labor MP's who desire an independent foreign policy are gaining wider backing. It would surprise no one here if before many months have elapsed there is a revision in British foreign policy. Even Conservatives fear being firmly tied to a depression. Even *The Times* has cautiously lamented the aggressive abandon of the Truman-Vandenberg policy. In regarding Great Britain as a long-term ally in American expansion we may be fooling no one but ourselves.

THE recent breakdown in the British national economy has not turned the average Englishman, according to Pollitt, toward conservative solutions. The British worker is not disillusioned. He wants more nationalization rather than less, more trade union personnel in the ranks of government and fewer of capital's experts, and he feels that many production lags are the result of widespread conviction that the Labor government remains more intent on guaranteeing profits to the employer than benefits to the worker. After all, only one industry, coal mining, is actually in operation as a nationalized undertaking. During a seven-week period ending Jan. 25, 1947, coal production increased by 2,011,000 tons over a similar period a year ago, although 2,133 fewer miners were being employed.

But everywhere else one still increases production for the exclusive profit of the employer. The harried worker, when faced with exhortations for higher production amid wretched working conditions, is likely to say, "What's in it for me?" He is sometimes discouraged, Pollitt said, by the fact that while wages remain stationary, stock market prices have soared after every legislative proposal for nationalization. Proposed long-term compensation to owners of property to be nationalized almost equals the income they would receive for an appreciable number of years under continuing private ownership. Most Britons are apparently convinced that the troubles of the Labor government result from too little nationalization and too much monopoly capitalism rather than the reverse.

Moreover, according to Pollitt, the British worker has permanently freed himself from the spell of the Tories. Pollitt feels there is virtually no chance of the British worker turning to reaction as a result of disillusion. Save in Churchillian circles there is no Red scare here or belief that Communists are enemy agents. Many Englishmen apparently think that such convictions are the certain mark of the conscious or unconscious fascist and that where they gain a wide and general acceptance fascism intrudes.

While the mass of British voters still believe that socialism can be obtained through the vehicle of the Labor Party, they are attracted more and more to the program of the Communist Party, the only British program that is dynamic, specific and detailed. Pollitt believes the tendency may increasingly be toward the Communist Party as the surest and quickest way of actually obtaining the socialism that the people of Britain want overwhelmingly. The core of the Communist program is an over-all national economic plan, providing for priorities in manpower and material at home and cooperation with Russia and the new European democracies abroad. It demands immediate and full independence for India, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt and Palestine, self-determination for Cyprus and Malta, and a democratic charter of rights for African colonies struggling to develop independence movements.

It calls specifically for the abandonment of the Anglo-American bloc and the substitution of the Three Power partnership on the lines of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. Perhaps the fact that the Communist program seeks to protect Britain from any covert threat to its national sovereignty, a threat veiled behind economic rather than political moves, is one reason for the program's growing acceptance. More and more Britons are recalling that England did not gain genuine modern sovereignty until Parliament controlled the purse strings and that the United States, not Parliament, now controls them to a marked degree.

At any rate Communist influence is increasing. *The Daily Worker*, a cooperative enterprise owned by some 20,000 shareholders, many of whom are not Communists, has a circulation of 125,000, and that circulation is steadily mounting. In addition, ten of the largest British trade unions, composing perhaps as much as half of the entire British trade union movement, have elected Communists to their top leadership. On these men, as much as upon any in Britain, rests the job of building production to the point

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Women's wear note: What well-known ex-haberdasher is now selling Easter bonnets for Dullesberg's, prominent Wall Street milliners?

necessary for national survival. Because of them and thousands of Communists in the trade unions, the Party program for industrial recovery is not a paper program. It has life and undoubtedly its main provisions, in one form or another, will become actuality.

I INTERVIEWED Pollitt one afternoon not long ago in his large, handsome office on King Street. He is an imposing man, deep-chested, heavy-shouldered, his black hair beginning to gray, his eyes blue in a broad, tanned face, his manner direct and friendly. Although he speaks with what to an American is a broad Lancashire accent, his attitude is urbane and polished, and although he is a worker who has been three times imprisoned, he was dressed with what to an American was a Bond Street flair. He is apparently that combination of worker and intellectual that is more common abroad than in the United States.

Pollitt is fifty-six years old and was born Nov. 22, 1890 in Droylesdon, near Liverpool. He entered the cotton mills when twelve years old and worked beside his mother, of whom he has written in his autobiography, "She it was who guided my every step in the labor movement." His great grandfather was active in the Chartist movement of more than a century ago, when British workers were fired upon by troops in a futile effort to stem their surge for reform. By the time he was twenty-one he was a shop steward and had organized the workers in the Groton Tank Works at Manchester. He built up the Thames Shop Steward movement, was arrested in 1915 for organizing a dock strike, and played a leading part in the famous "Jolly George" strike in 1920, when longshoremen refused to load munitions to be used against the Russians. In 1921 he was arrested during a miners' strike and in 1925 he went to prison for eleven months on a trumped-up charge of sedition. He stood for Parliament in 1945 in Rhonda East, a mining district.

When I saw him he was sitting behind an extraordinarily large table in the center of his book-lined office and on the wall back of him was a portrait of Lenin. I told him that because of the backing and filling, advance and retreat of the Labor government there were many progressive Americans who scarcely knew what their attitude should be toward it. In answering he spoke of the position of British Communists, declaring, "We support the policy of the Labor government when that policy is weakening capitalism, improving the position of the working class, and hastening socialism. We criticize it when its actions have the effect, as they sometimes do, of strengthening reaction. We defend the Labor government against the attacks of the Tories in its moves towards nationalization while profoundly disagreeing with its tendency to overpay the owners of nationalized industry and put the burdens of nationalization on the workers."

The crux of the domestic situation, he said, was the manpower shortage. Although about 1,250,000 more workers are needed, the government does little toward demobilization of the army of 1,500,000 or toward using the 1,500,000 women who have left industry since the war. The manpower shortage was, in addition, most crucial in those very basic industries that had to be revived before anything else could be revived. About 40,000 miners were leaving the pits each year, while only 10,000 new workers were entering them. Young men and women were refusing to enter the textile industry and deserting agriculture by the thousands. It was the same in ship building and the building trades. The reason was mean, archaic working conditions and low pay. Both had to be remedied and could be remedied, since profits in Britain were twenty

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percent higher than in 1943 and were still rising. A ten percent decrease in profits would permit a ten percent raise in wages without an increase in prices.

It was distressing, Pollitt said, that most of the American loan had not been used for machinery and the modernization of industry, as was urgently needed and had originally been planned. Moreover, workers resented the fact that most plans for nationalization gave capitalists the key positions in operation and left the workers out. There would have to be a great renaissance in the use of trade-union management committees in actual day-to-day operation, not only in nationalized industries but in private industry. The Labor government seemed to be afraid of the people, afraid to tap their creative energies. The economic tie-up with America was so complete that Britain's industry was often brought to a standstill because of the lack of raw materials ordinarily received from Europe. For example, although 4,000,000 new housing units were needed and there were actual plans for only 438,000, the construction of the latter number had come to a standstill because of the need of timber from the Baltic countries, the Soviet Union and Scandinavia.

"An industrial planning commission must be set up," Pollitt continued, "including trade unionists and technical experts as well as civil servants and industrialists. This commission must have subcommissions comprising men and women with industrial experience in each of the main branches of the industry.

"The first task of the planning commission must be to set targets for a half dozen key industries for at least two or three years. Production targets should be immediately instituted for coal, agriculture, steel, power, building materials and textiles. The engineering industry must be mobilized behind the reequipment plan under a comprehensive scheme giving priorities. Raw materials must be strictly controlled, black market activities severely punished, price controls tightened, profits investigated and utility production increased. Manpower must be attracted to priority tasks by higher wages, a shorter working week, better welfare facilities, equal pay for equal work, day nurseries and clinics. Distribution must also be planned. The pace in this planning could be set by the cooperative movement. Taxation must be used to aid the government's objectives by giving relief to the working class, providing incentives for production and at the same time improving the distribution of wealth between the classes. Profit taxes should be introduced at once."

Pollitt spoke of other things: of the increase of anti-Semitism and the Party's campaign for a statute outlawing anti-Semitic activity; of the Party's campaign for demobilization "of our present excessive armed forces"; of the fact that coal production had increased since nationalization despite canards by the Tory press and also of the fact that the recent coal crisis could have been lessened if owners had taken cognizance of the warnings that had been given months before and properly rationed their fuel supplies. But in the end, as is the case with most conversations these days in England, his words turned to the United States.

"Our almost complete economic dependence on the United States creates resentment," he said. "This disquiet had steadily increased since the Republican victory in the Congressional elections. We remember how the Republicans liquidated another Labor government and turned Great Britain to reaction in 1931. The Republicans then toppled a Labor government as the result of the demands made upon it in connection with a loan. You remember that the Hoover administration offered a loan on the condition that certain social services being provided to the British people be abandoned. In 1929, you remember, a Labor government had been elected. In 1931 it applied to Washington for a loan which was given on the basis of a ten percent reduction in British social services. MacDonald favored it and as a result of this American pressure the Labor government fell and was replaced by a coalition."

There is a good deal of interest in Britain, as there is throughout the world, in the possibility of a third party in the United States. An increasing number of people are beginning to believe that the Truman administration is a captive of Vandenberg, Hoover, Dulles and other Republicans. The words of Wallace are heard with the greatest interest. Here, as everywhere else, progressives feel that a great historic task confronts the American people. Many Britons declare that the center of world reaction has passed from Berlin to Washington. There can be no lasting peace, they say, until American labor and its allies have returned the United States to the democratic path of FDR.

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

News Item: David Lawrence of the New York "Sun" writes that by taxing the higher income brackets we are encouraging a "What is the use?" attitude.

There is no point in trying to be a millionaire these days. A man can work his employes to the bone and rack his brains thinking of ways and means to overcharge the public. He can struggle to put away money enough for a rainy century. What's the use? The government steps in and all he has left is a paltry few hundred thousand.

The government is just out and out discriminating against the higher income groups. I pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes every year while the average man, who was too lazy to be born of rich parents, gets away with a few hundred or less.

What's the use? Each year I give huge sums of money to charity and welfare organizations. To the National Association of Manufacturers I give $15,000, the Republicans get $25,000, Washington lobbyists get $15,000, and the Red Cross $5. We live modestly—we haven't bought any new cars since 1946 and my wife has no more mink coats than Saks-Fifth Avenue.

It would serve this country right if we rich people stopped trying to get richer.

What's the use? We'd be playing right into the hands of the radicals by putting everybody on the same level. Prices would sky-rocket so low that even the ordinary worker would be able to buy enough to eat and wear. Houses would be built so fast that families would have to split up to occupy them all.

To prevent this chaos, the patriotic individuals of the higher income brackets will stay in business. It not only makes sense, it makes dollars and sense.

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GREECE: I MEET THE GUERRILLAS

Who are the people Washington calls a menace to American security? Here is an eye-witness report.

By GEORGE THOMAS

Mr. Thomas, a Laborite member of Parliament, wrote his eye-witness account of the Greek guerrillas before the Truman Doctrine was issued to Congress and before the State Department released its so-called background material on conditions in Greece. The Thomas report contradicts in almost every particular the official lies spread about the guerrillas and reaffirms again what honest observers know to be the truth.

Despite the administration's frenzied effort to push through its measure to aid Greek and Turkish reaction, national support for the Pepper-Taylor-Blatnik resolution is increasing. This resolution provides for aid to Greece through the United Nations and excludes any kind of military assistance either for Turkey or Greece. With all its deficiencies, notably the resolution's failure to insist that no help be given the monarcho-fascists, it deserves the widest public endorsement.

Write your Congressman, the State Department and the White House asking for immediate hearings on this new resolution.

London (by mail).

I AM not an extreme Leftist. I am an ordinary member of the Labor Party. I visited Greece on behalf of the National Union of Students, the Students' Labor Federation and the British Youth Coordinating Committee to observe the trial of EPON, the Greek Democratic Youth Organization.

EPON is a cultural body seeking to help in the reconstruction of a troubled country. It is incomprehensible to me that the present Greek government should try to suppress the creative talents of the young people.

I visited fifty men awaiting transportation to the islands. They were crammed together in a small room. One was suffering from TB and told me he received no medical attention. When the prison official declared that he had, all the detainees with one accord denied this.

Under the emergency measures now in force, the Security Committees can charge and try a person in his absence and without his knowledge, and then inform him that he has been sentenced to deportation. If a man flees to the mountains to avoid deportation, his wife and children can be deported. But since the announcement of the UN Commission, it is true that women and children are now being brought back from the islands.

In Athens EAM is legal. But in the provinces, if you admit loyalty to EAM—whose heroic struggle against the Germans is well known—you risk imprisonment, deportation or murder. That is why so many flee to the mountains.

A follower of the veteran Liberal, Mr. Sophoulis, told me that he knew that he was due for exile, but the arrival of the UN Commission had led to the delay of his deportation. I met a priest of eighty who had been deported because his son was president of the local EAM.

FROM Trikkala, I set out to visit the neighboring villages. It was a dramatic moment when, in a village, a young man with a rifle came up to me, sprang to attention, saluted and said, "Andartes." I was then in guerrilla territory. . . .

I visited many villages, traveling by donkey (and it is not true that "anybody can ride a donkey") and everywhere I found the people going about their normal daily routine in guerrilla territory. They were bitterly opposed to the present government, particularly because it deprives them of food, even of UNRRA food. Civil servants in the guerrilla areas do not receive their salaries. Even teachers are not paid by the government. As a teacher myself, I was amazed to find that if a teacher in guerrilla territory carries on with his job he gets no pay from the government. But if he goes to a neighboring town, where he will remain idle, the government will keep him in idleness.

Of the guerrilla leaders, I first met Capt. Kikizas and then General Markos. I also met Capt. Ypsilantes. Kikizas was formerly a bank clerk, Ypsilantes a school teacher. Their manner was courteous and friendly. They spoke frankly. They declared that they would welcome the UN Commission of inquiry to their territory, and I conveyed back to Athens a message from General Markos to this effect.

Capt. Ypsilantes is a young man of about twenty-seven. He wears a huge moustache, which tends to make him look much older. Capt. Kikizas also sports a huge moustache, which he

E. Miller.

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continually twirls as he speaks. He told me that he had started to grow this moustache during the German occupation, when he had a wager with the British Liaison Officer, Colonel Hamilton, as to which of them would grow the largest one.

General Markos was true to the form of the other officers. Anglo-American in dress, he, too, sported the huge moustache. When our conversations concerning the Andartes had finished he talked with me of characters in English history.

The guerrillas are primarily peasants, with teachers, doctors, lawyers, priests among them. But, said Markos, "We are not simply the peasants nor is the movement only Communist. This is a movement of popular revolt against tyranny."

I must say that if there were a similar tyranny in Britain today, I firmly believe that we also would have our "Resistance Movement" fighting against it.

Markos is forty-two years old, mild, and was ready to talk. "The guerrillas," he said, "do not desire to become the government of Greece. But we desire a government representing the people and restoring democracy. The situation could be changed within twenty-four hours by a political decision, the formation of a government, including EAM, which could purge the state of fascists and hold fair elections. If British troops remain this will not happen, since they act as a shield for the present regime."

ONE of the most important questions I had to ask, of course, was whether the Andartes get help from the northern neighbors of Greece. What did Markes reply? He laughed and said: "We are Greeks and want our liberty. We want no foreign assistance. We want neither Russian, Yugoslavian, Bulgarian nor British interference in our affairs. What we want is to be allowed to run our country. We have no assistance from outside."

He showed me the equipment the guerrillas have — and I saw tommy guns, Sten guns, and other weapons of clearly British origin. He described how they raided the Greek army, seized equipment, and in that way kept themselves supplied.

As to the atrocity stories, of which I was told many in Athens and by the authorities, Markos assured me that every recruit to the Andartes was personally checked on in his village of origin, and nobody of doubtful reputation was accepted. The death penalty was enforced on criminals who had been captured for the following crimes —murder of civilians, rape, the burning of villagers' houses, and the pillaging of grain.

I did not only interview and visit the guerrillas in Greece, I spoke to the Premier and to other Cabinet Ministers. I saw judges, professors, trade union leaders and others who have been dismissed from their jobs by the present regime.

I believe that the present policy of the government in Greece—which, I regret to say, is being supported by the British authorities—is driving Greece to disaster. Its policy of persecution against all opposition groups is creating the very growth of opposition in the country which it is officially trying to prevent.

Only a broad government, including EAM and prepared to purge the fascists from the state, can win the confidence of the whole Greek people. It is argued that EAM is not in Parliament, and therefore cannot be taken into the government. But the present Premier, Maximos, was never elected to Parliament, and, therefore, by the same rule, should not be in the government.

The present government should give way to a coalition, including the parties of the Left. I am convinced that the steps necessary are (1) the formation of a new government under the leadership of Sophoulis (Liberal), with EAM represented; (2) a complete purge of traitors and collaborators from the government service; (3) a complete amnesty to Right and Left; (4) the holding of free elections under the sponsorship of UN.

These steps are vital in the Greek national interest. The country which gave Pericles to the world, and which was the cradle of democracy, deserves a better fate than she now suffers.

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This bright star must shine...

For several weeks we have watched NEW MASSES' plea for financial support.

If you will run your eye over the list of signatures below you will quickly see that some of us are Marxists, some of us are not. But we are all united in the deep belief that NEW MASSES has a right to live. We believe in a free press; and we know that an organ like NEW MASSES could be suppressed by its creditors as effectively as it could by its most rabid enemies. And in saying that we do not necessarily imply full support for all NEW MASSES stands for. But we do believe in its constitutional right to publish its views. For whatever any of us think of its policies—agree or disagree with them—we are of the conviction that if NEW MASSES goes under there will be cheering and stomping in the back rooms of every reactionary political clique in the country.

We cannot forget the great services NEW MASSES did in exposing Hitler's emissaries in this country at a time when the word anti-fascist was hardly fashionable. Nor can we forget that it was NEW MASSES that provided a fresh spring breeze in American cultural life, in art, in letters; in all the many things which are now accepted as a matter of course but which had their origins in the pages of this magazine. We cannot forget the great names associated with it: John Reed, Theodore Dreiser, Lincoln Steffens, Art Young, William Gropper, Gabriel Peri, Louis Aragon, Pablo Neruda, R. Palme Dutt, J. B. S. Haldane—a list as long as your good right arm.

☆ **For these reasons and more we ask you to help NEW MASSES. We ask you to dig deep and hard and to ask your friends to do the same. NEW MASSES is and has been a national institution, a bright star. We must remove the question of its future existence for we are certain that its future and yours, as democratic Americans, are tied together closely.**

RICHARD O. BOYER
W. E. B. DU BOIS
KATHERINE DUNHAM
HOWARD FAST
BEN GOLD
DASHIELL HAMMETT
MINNA HARKAVY
HELEN WEST HELLER
CORLISS LAMONT
MERIDEL LE SUEUR
ALBERT MALTZ
REP. VITO MARCANTONIO
REV. WILLIAM HOWARD MELISH
MARGARET SCHLAUCH
VINCENT SHEEAN
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THE TRUTH ABOUT A Statement to America

By EUGENE DENNIS

***NEW MASSES** presents the full text of the statement which Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party, was prevented from making when he appeared to testify on March 26 before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. We are publishing this statement both because of its paramount importance for all Americans and because the commercial press has joined with the Un-American Committee in suppressing it. This document eloquently and incisively challenges the conspiracy against American democracy under the guise of anti-Communism, demolishes the canards against the Communists and illuminates their role as patriots and champions of the national welfare. We urge our readers to protest the efforts to gag the Communists and other progressives and to demand that they be accorded all the rights that belong to them as democratic Americans.*

I AM Eugene Dennis, the General Secretary of the American Communist Party. I appear in opposition to the Rankin Bill, H.R. 1884, and the Sheppard Bill, H.R. 2122.

I am here to defend the inalienable right of Americans to be Communists. I am here to defend the constitutional right of the Communist Party to function as a legal political party which openly presents its views, its program and its candidates to the American people.

In so doing, I in fact defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights—which H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884 propose to nullify. I defend the right of the American people to promote the welfare and advance the social progress of the nation by democratic means and in the spirit of America's progressive traditions. H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884 place this basic right in jeopardy. They propose to usurp for a party in power the right to pass upon the political programs of other parties—although the Constitution reserves this right to the people and to the people alone.

In addition, I am jealous for my country's good name abroad and defend here the national security of the United States and the cause of world peace. I do not believe that other nations can fail to see an ominous connection between these legislative proposals to by-pass the Bill of Rights and recent moves by the US government which are generally interpreted as by-passing the United Nations.

The definition of democracy, offered to the Council of Foreign Ministers by Secretary of State Marshall in behalf of the American delegation, has a direct bearing on H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884. I ask leave to introduce into the record both Secretary Marshall's statement of March 14 and my cable to Mr. Marshall on March 16 (Exhibit A).

I submit that the United States will forfeit the respect of all democratic peoples if it leads a double life. Others cannot but judge the sincerity of American sermons on democracy abroad by American practice of democracy at home.

I shall in due course deal with the deliberately false charges against my Party, which H.R. 1884 and H.R. 2122 lodge as a pretext for their unconstitutional proposals. But I wish first to deal with these proposals, and in some detail.

The Rankin bill, H.R. 1884, would prohibit Communists from running for public office, whether on the Communist ticket or that of any other party. This proposal is on its face unconstitutional. Even Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach, who endorses the objectives of H.R. 1884, does not attempt to defend its constitutionality or that of any similar legislation.

H.R. 1884 is in conflict with Secretary Marshall's declaration that "Freely constituted political parties should be insured the right to participate in a free and competitive election system in which each is accorded equal opportunity to present its views, win adherents and obtain just representation."

On one premise, and on only one premise, can H.R. 1884 be reconciled with the Secretary of State's enunciation of American policy. That is on the premise the German people are to be trusted to make a wise use of democratic liberties —while the American people are not. Does this committee care to go to the American people with that thesis?

THE THREAT TO OTHERS

THE Rankin bill does not stop at curtailing the rights of Communists. It states frankly that its objective is to prevent the undefined and undefinable Communist "sympathizers" from running for public office on any ticket. If this measure were adopted, any candidate in sympathy with any part of the immediate program of the Communist Party or with any of its long-range aspirations would be subject to challenge and could be removed from the ballot and jailed by his political opponents.

Next year we have a crucial presidential and national election. If this bill is passed, voters in the Democratic, the Republican and third parties could not nominate—much less elect—any candidate who sympathizes with the Communist view that our nation's peace and economic welfare require that the people curb the power of the big monopolies, the fascist-minded economic royalists and war-mongers.

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That is the core of the Communist program in the present period, and the main plank for its 1948 platform. That is one reason the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce urge the passage of this bill.

Passage of H.R. 1884 would also require all parties to reject any candidate in sympathy with the trade union movement and the Communist program of defending the Wagner Act and labor's rights. Candidates opposed to the open shop and the anti-labor injunction, or advocating the strengthening of the Wage-Hour Act, could not be candidates. That is another reason the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce urge the passage of this bill.

Passage of the Rankin bill would make it illegal for any party to place on the ballot a candidate who was sympathetic to the Communist view that the Negro people are entitled to equal rights and full citizenship. Moreover, Negroes themselves, as well as their friends and democratic allies, thus could be barred from running for office. It would be illegal for any candidate to concur in the Communist view that Secretary Marshall's March 14 declaration places upon the Congress the obligation to repeal the poll-tax and abolish the white primary.

At this point, I wish to introduce into the record my report to the December, 1946, meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party, which includes the 1947 legislative program of my Party. (Exhibit B.) An analysis of this program must establish that only those who are out of sympathy with every need and desire of the American people could clear themselves of the charge of being sympathetic to the Communists on some vital issue or other.

Can anyone question what would happen to a candidate who had once been associated with some aspect of the New Deal's domestic program — and now also advocated that this nation return to the Roosevelt policy of lasting peace based on Big Three unity and American-Soviet friendship? He would be ruled out from the start—as H.R. 1884 intends he should be.

We have only to see what has been happening in regard to a few executive appointments to understand what a wide variety of persons would be barred from *elective* office if this legislation were adopted. The classic case is, of course, that of Mr. David Lilienthal. But even Francis Biddle is no longer above suspicion, although as Attorney General he tried without success to get the Supreme Court to rule that the Communist Party is an advocate of force and violence. Mr. Biddle is now running like a hare, pursued by the hounds he helped unleash.

Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach was among the first to be caught in the back-fire of his own call to outlaw the Communist Party. Today the Republicans are after one of his underlings, who has turned up on this committee's voluminous blacklist. Tomorrow it may be Mr. Schwellenbach himself. He was once a New Dealer. The Neo-inquisition in America does not intend that those who recant shall be saved.

The Rankin bill proposes to outlaw the Communist Party "whether or not any change is hereafter made" in its name. Thus, once the Communist Party were outlawed any democratic political coalition, any party accepting the support of an organization of independent voters, or any steps toward the organization of a new progressive, people's party —would in turn be outlawed on the pretext that here was the Communist Party resurrected under a new name.

Furthermore, some Republicans, some members of this committee, and the Hearst-McCormick press, have more than once in the past charged that the Democratic Party was itself under Communist influence. If the Democratic Party were to return to the progressive policies of Franklin Roosevelt, this charge, revived and vigorously pressed, could conceivably lead to the eventual outlawing of the Democratic Party.

In any case, the Rankin bill is a perfect set-up for facilitating a Republican victory in the 1948 elections. How then does it happen that such a measure is introduced by one who bears the designation *Democrat?* I carefully refrain from charging collusion or conspiracy. But I suggest that the GOP-Southern Bourbon bipartisanship can be carried to the extreme of totalitarianism.

"DANGEROUS THOUGHTS"

THE Rankin bill expands from the field of politics to take in the realm of thought. It would abridge and destroy all freedom of the press, and authorize a police surveillance of the private correspondence of every American citizen. It would put an end to academic freedom in all American schools and colleges.

In the language of H.R. 1884, "It shall be unlawful . . . to convey the impression of sympathy with communism or Communist ideology." If this proposal were to be adopted, teachers and writers—even the writers of private letters—could be fined $10,000 and jailed for ten years for conveying the impression of sympathy with a fundamental Communist tenet—that all men are created equal. That this happens also to be a fundamental tenet of American democracy as set forth in the Declaration of Independence would not exonerate them.

Why is it that H.R. 1884, and all similar so-called anti-Communist legislation, spreads so very wide a net? Secretary Schwellenbach, among others, argues that this is unavoidable because only by policing the mind and probing the heart of every American will it be possible to uncover the "hidden" Communists. The fact, of course, is that the overwhelming majority of the members of the Communist Party declare themselves openly and with pride. But it is also unfortunately true that some few of them, for reasons of economic security, find it necessary to avoid public announcement of their Communist affiliation.

At an appropriate time I should like to propose to the Congress an effective and practical means of helping to

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terminate this situation, which is not of my Party's making nor to its liking.

I shall propose a joint resolution by the two Houses of Congress, which will state that it is the sense of the Congress that the Constitution and the Bill of Rights afford to members of the Communist Party the same protection afforded to all other American citizens. The joint resolution should further state that the Congress interprets Secretary Marshall's declaration that all patriotic citizens shall be permitted to live without "fear of being denied the right to work or deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" to apply without discrimination for race, creed, national origin or political belief—and to make no exception of Communist Party members. Finally, the joint resolution shall state that Congress holds there shall be no discrimination against Communists or other anti-fascists—Negro or white—in either private or public employment or in the right to run for and hold public office or office in a trade union or other democratic organization.

I pledge that on the day Congress adopts such a resolution, every single member of my Party will be more than happy and willing to publicly declare his Communist affiliation, of which he is so proud!

I would remind the committee that both the methods of the Rankin and Sheppard bills and the methods proposed by me have been tried and tested in situations similar to that faced by the Communist Party in the United States today.

Many early Christians concealed their religious beliefs to escape persecution by the Emperors of Rome. The Emperor Diocletian tried to ferret them out by decrees closely resembling the anti-Communist measures now before Congress. He failed. But when Constantine the Great proclaimed Christianity as the state religion, the Christians publicly avowed themselves.

Different and more moderate remedies have proved much more successful. I cite two examples from American history. Some of the followers of Thomas Jefferson were obliged to conceal their views while the Alien and Sedition laws were in effect. They avowed themselves openly when those laws were repealed. Thousands of American trade unionists were obliged to conceal their trade union affiliation in the days of the labor spy and the open shop. They too avowed themselves openly when the Wagner Act gave them the guarantee that they could wear a union button without getting fired from their jobs.

My proposal would eliminate from American public life the so-called problem of the "hidden" Communist. The Rankin and Sheppard bills, on the contrary, would endeavor to drive all Communists and other progressives into hiding.

FROM ANZIO TO LEYTE

I now turn briefly to H.R. 2122. The Sheppard bill would also nullify the right of Americans to join the Communist Party. It would further deny them the right to join any organization directly or indirectly affiliated to virtually any international body.

I am sure H.R. 2122 would not have Chairman Thomas' support if there were the slightest danger it might be used to create difficulties for his influential constituent, Standard Oil of New Jersey—which as late as March, 1944, was turning over vital American military secrets to the Nazis by way of its partners in the I. G. Farben cartel.

It would be interesting to know if members of the committee concur in my opinion that H.R. 2122 could and might be used to require the CIO to terminate its present affiliation to the World Federation of Trade Unions. And also to know how they think it would affect organizations associated with UNESCO and other agencies of the United Nations.

I come now to the allegations that the American Communist Party is the "agent of a foreign power"; that it "advocates the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence"; and that it is not a political party in the accepted sense, but "a conspiracy."

As to the first of these slanders—it is a lie that the American Communists are agents of a foreign power. That was what Hitler said of the German Communists, Quisling of the Norwegian Communists, Laval and Doriot (the French Louis Budenz) of the French Communists. When V-E Day came just two years ago, the peoples of the world rejoiced that "the lie was dead and damned and the truth stood up instead." But now, on the eve of the second anniversary of V-E Day, Hitler's Big Lie rises again here in our America to shame the living and desecrate the war dead.

Loyalty and patriotism must be judged by the test to which they were put in the most bitter and costly war of our nation's history. We American Communists pass that acid test with flying colors, and no group or individual can escape its judgment.

In the Second World War, fifteen thousand American Communists took up arms. Major General Clayton Bissel, wartime head of the US Army Intelligence Corps, defended the loyalty of Communist officers before a subcommittee of the House Military Affairs Committee on March 13, 1945. He said, ". . . they have shown by their deeds that they are *upholding* the United States by force and violence."

American Communists sealed in blood our Party's loyalty to the only power to which our members give allegiance—the sovereign power that resides in the American people.

Before the hearings on these bills are over, I shall submit to the committee as relevant testimony an extensive though incomplete list of the Communist war dead, of our Communist leaders who are war veterans, and of our comrades who have been decorated by their government for distinguished service in the nation's cause.

But at this point I wish to cite the example of Capt. Herman Bottcher. The GI's in his outfit called him "the one-man army." Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy said of Bottcher, "He went to the South Pacific. There he was promoted to sergeant, then made a captain in the field. He was wounded, decorated and killed in action at Leyte. This man proved his loyalty, regardless of what the War Department might have found." Like 4,000 other veterans of the Spanish Republican war, Capt. Herman Bottcher, decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross with Cluster, learned, in the ranks of the American Communist Party, to hate and to fight fascism.

Likewise I give you Pvt. Hank Forbes, who was killed in action at Anzio. His commanding officer said this Communist was an outstanding morale builder who inspired his whole outfit with his own deep feeling for what the anti-Axis war was all about.

I also give you Robert Thompson, veteran of the Spanish Republican war, bearer of the Distinguished Service Cross, and now Chairman of the New York State Communist Party. On Jan. 19, 1943, Lt. Gen. R. L. Eichelberger, recommending the promotion of Staff Sergeant Thompson to the rank of First Lieutenant, wrote, "It is believed that the appointment of Staff Sergeant Thompson to the grade

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recommended, for demonstrated battlefield leadership ability, will have a very favorable effect throughout the 32nd Division and encourage emulation of his fine example."

Only enemies of the American people, fascists and perjurers would dare impugn the patriotism of these men, or question the loyalty of some 70,000 Communists, veterans and non-veterans, who have deepened their devotion to their country as a result of their membership in the American Communist Party.

EARLY AMERICAN MARXISTS

IN PEACE as in war, we Communists have ever served the true interests of our country, its workers and common people. We never could and never can do otherwise, for we were born of the American working class, endowed with its aspirations and revolutionary traditions, educated and strengthened in its struggles.

To charge that we are Soviet agents is to deny the fact that there were Marxists in America long before there was a Soviet Union. These early Socialists, the forebears of the modern American Communist Party, stood with Lincoln against the slaveholders' rebellion. Lincoln did not doubt their loyalty. He made the Communist Joseph Weydemeyer a colonel in the Union army.

While the Czars still ruled Russia, the modern American Communist movement was developing in the Socialist Party of Eugene Debs, in the IWW of Big Bill Haywood, in the American Federation of Labor where Jack Johnstone and William Z. Foster led the great struggles to organize the unorganized in the mass production industries.

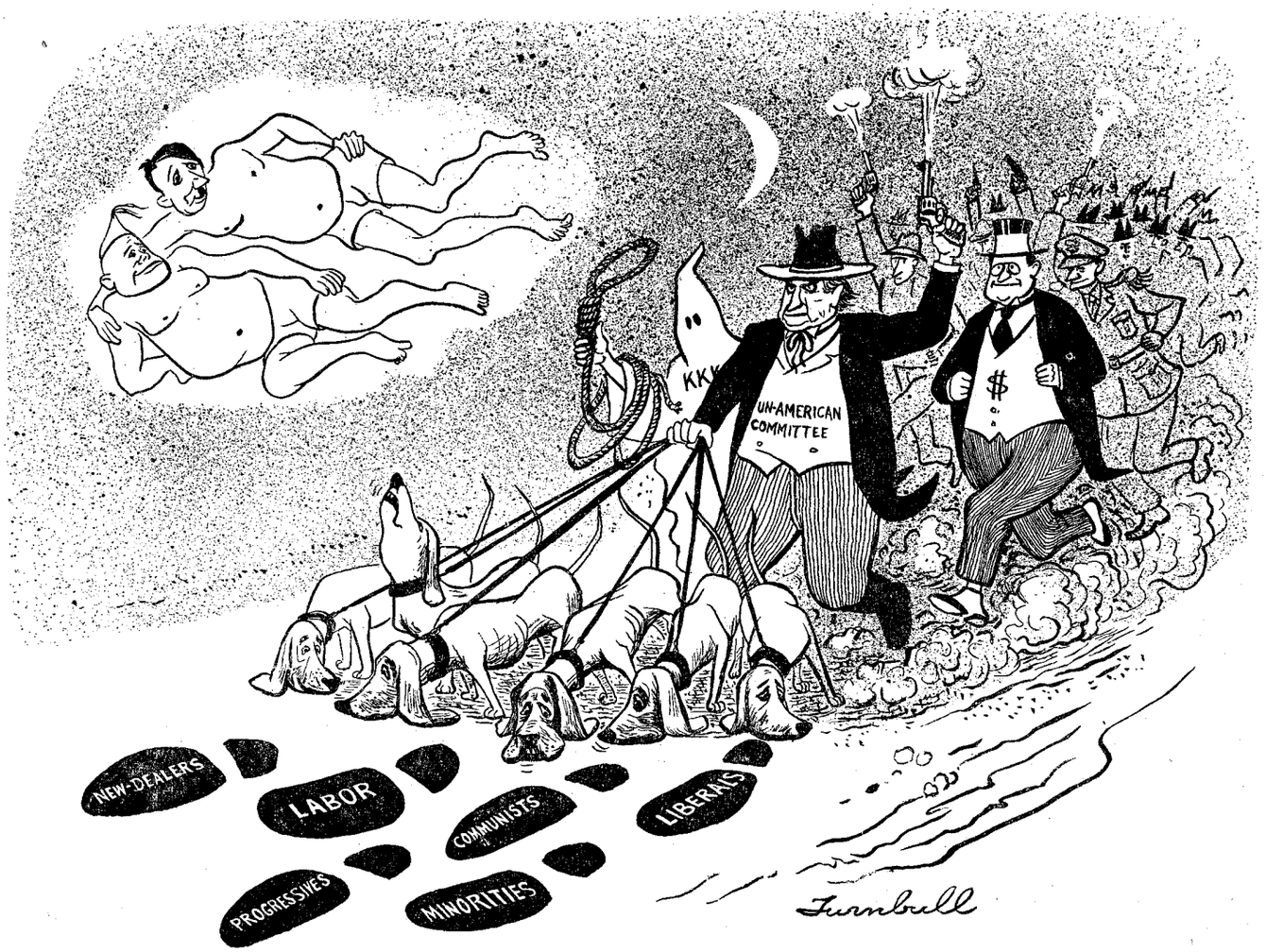
Our movement is as young as American capitalism and the working class it brought into being. But the charge of "foreign agent" is older—as old as toryism in America. It was hurled against Thomas Jefferson when he championed democratic rights at home and the right of self-determination for the young French Republic.

There is no conflict between the American patriotism and the working class internationalism of American Communists —as the proposed legislation implies. Modern capitalism and modern science have combined to make this One World. Within that One World of which all men and all nations are a part, we American Communists feel special bonds that link us with the workers and Communists of other lands.

We share with other workers the common bond of our working-class origin. In the often quoted phrase of Abraham Lincoln, we American Communists hold that "The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and tongues and kindreds."

Our universal Marxist science is the fraternal bond between us and the Communists of all lands. Scientists in every field know this kinship with other scientists. American physicists who study and put to use the laws of matter and motion, including nuclear energy, incorporate into their work the experience and knowledge of physicists of other countries.

So it is with us Marxists. Ours is the science of the laws



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that govern the development of human society, of the progress man has made from tribal times, through feudalism and capitalism to socialism. We believe that man himself, and particularly the working man, can help to shape that progress and he will do so more effectively when he acts not on blind instinct but on the basis of scientific socialist theory and practice.

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

It is now seven years since the American Communist Party severed its connection with the Communist International. At that time we acted on our own initiative, to meet the special conditions arising in our country out of the Voorhis Act—which we then condemned. It is now four years since the Communist International voluntarily dissolved, by the vote of its affiliated parties.

During the years of our organizational affiliation to the Communist International we published in our press communications we received from that body. We made no secret of the fact that we sent delegates to its international congresses. They came home and reported publicly to as many Americans as would listen to them. They reported publicly to our Party members, without whose approval Communist International decisions had no validity for us.

We were at particular pains to publicize as widely as possible the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935. The heroic Bulgarian, Georgi Dimitrov, presided over that historic Congress. Even the members of this committee must admit that Dimitrov was well qualified by first-hand experience to lead a discussion on the subject of how to fight fascism.

The Seventh Congress of the CI, to which we American Communists made important contributions, prepared the way for the dissolution of the Communist International. It registered the fact that the Communist Parties of the world were independent organizations, each of native origin, and making their own decisions. It corrected some mistakes made by young Marxists who were just beginning to learn that Marxism is a scientific guide to action, and not a dogma. It called on the Communist Parties of the world to check and defeat the fascists in every land by studying the concrete conditions and the special methods of fascism in each country. It called on them to rally and mobilize the workers and people of every nation for united action against fascism and war.

Our American Communist Party brought to the American people, openly and publicly, the lessons we learned through that fraternal exchange of experience with other anti-fascist fighters. If this was treason to the United States —why didn't Mr. J. Edgar Hoover make the most of it at the time?

What does Mr. J. Edgar Hoover know now about the Communist International that he didn't know when it was in existence? Why does the FBI consider the American Communist Party a more dangerous "foreign agent" seven years after it left the Communist International than it was while it maintained that affiliation?

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI are currently engaged in the most extensive antiquarian research, combing their dead files for ancient documents, resolutions and outdated pledges and other published and public relics of the Communist Party's past.

We Communists are the first to admit that some of us made more than a few mistakes and did many infantile things in the period of our immaturity. But Mr. Hoover will find no evidence of Communist "crime" in his files. Even Hoover himself is witness that we Communists never in any way or at any time injured or subverted the government of the United States.

It was after J. Edgar Hoover had directed the arrest of thousands of real and suspected Communists in 1920, as the officer in charge of the infamous Palmer Raids, that he himself officially admitted that the Communists had not been guilty of "any violation of the federal laws." This admission was made in an inner-office memorandum to Assistant Attorney General Donovan on Oct. 16, 1924, several months after Hoover was made Acting Director of the FBI. Attorney General Harlan Stone, later a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, secured this reluctant admission from Hoover.

On May 15, 1924, Attorney General Stone declared: "The bureau of investigation is not concerned with political or other opinions of individuals. It is concerned only with such conduct as is forbidden by the laws of the United States. When a police system passes beyond these limits, it is dangerous to the proper administration of justice and to human liberty, which it should be our first concern to cherish."

THE TRUMAN LOYALTY ORDER

I let Mr. Stone's remarks stand as my own comment on the President's March 22 Executive Order establishing a secret police system over the political opinions of government employes. I should like at this point to state that I shall introduce shortly into the record a statement issued by the National Board of the Communist Party on this executive nullification of the Bill of Rights.

As a further comment on the responsibility of the Communist Party for any curios Mr. J. Edgar Hoover may unearth, I draw the committee's attention to the fact that Article XIV of our Party's Constitution rightfully and explicitly guards against just such an attempted perversion of justice and common sense. Article XIV states, "The Communist Party is not responsible for any political document, policy, book, article or any other expression of political opinion except such as are issued by authority of this and subsequent national conventions and its regularly constituted leadership."

In this connection I would also like to point out that we Communists adopted Article XIV of the Constitution of the CPUSA because we have changed our policies and views on many questions of theory, program and tactics in accord with changing conditions and new economic and social developments. This is only natural because Marxism is a science, and as a science must take into account new phenomena and thereby must constantly be enriched and developed. Therefore, clearly, we do not necessarily approve nor agree with our position or documents of former years—nor do we condone the mistakes and errors of our past which we are the first to admit. Hence, we can be held accountable and responsible only for those acts, documents or publications of the past of which we may now affirm the correctness and which we accept officially today or on the morrow.

So far as I know, neither the Democratic nor the Republican Party has taken similar action. We Communists would not, however, hold Congressman Thomas nor Hoover's GOP responsible for Abraham Lincoln's democratic assertion that "Any people anywhere being inclined and having

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the power have a right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better."

Nor do we hold Congresman Rankin, or even President Truman, responsible for Thomas Jefferson's prayer, "God forbid we should ever be twenty years without a rebellion."

LOOK AT THE RECORD

J. Edgar Hoover, Attorney General Clark, Legion Commander Griffith, Congressmen Rankin and Thomas—and now the Federal Commission on Employe Loyalty—all profess to be mind readers. Proponents of this legislation assert that it is necessary because Communists "think this" and "believe that." We reply that by our deeds you shall know us—and not by what the persecutors of "dangerous thoughts" think we think.

All our deeds have been the deeds of patriots, of anti-fascists and of champions of the American people's welfare. It was in America's interest that we fought fascism in Spain, opposed Japanese aggression in China, demanded sanctions against Italy in Ethiopia, upheld Roosevelt's call to quarantine the Axis aggressors, and condemned Chamberlain and Daladier for selling out Czechoslovakia and world peace at Munich.

This committee called us "un-American" and "pro-Russian" before the war, and after Pearl Harbor it dubbed us the "premature anti-fascists." But millions of Americans know now that the policies we Communists fought for before the war were American policies. They know now that if all the anti-fascists of the world had refused to be stampeded by those who condemned as unpatriotic any policy that coincided with a policy advanced by the Soviet Union—the Second World War might have been prevented, or, at least, very quickly ended.

During the war some phrase-maker—it might have been William Randolph Hearst or maybe it was Col. Robert McCormick—said we must be "Soviet agents" because we were "over-zealous patriots." We do not admit that there could be an excess of zeal on the part of any American worthy to be thought a patriot when the fate of our nation hung in the balance. Do the proponents of this legislation contend we should have worked for the *defeat of the United States*—in order to "clear" ourselves of the charge that we were zealous for a *Soviet victory*, for a United Nations victory?

Now and in unprecedented furore the billion-dollar "patriots" and their spokesmen return to the attack. But we Communists will not be stampeded now into taking an un-American stand merely to please those who have resurrected Hitler's Red Bogey to advance their own quest for empire and for Anglo-Saxon supremacy. And now there are millions of Americans who have learned from the war and the tragic decade that preceded it. They aren't going to be stampeded either.

We Communists are by no means alone in our demand that the Yalta and Potsdam agreements be carried out to uproot the last vestiges of fascism everywhere. Millions of non-Communists also know that the Du Ponts, Standard Oil, General Electric, Westinghouse and the other cartellists rearmed Germany after the First World War. These millions are as determined as we are that the cartellists shall not succeed in their current effort to rearm Germany again.

The American people know that the men of the trusts sold America short to their Axis partners during the war. They know that these men without a country come into court with unclean hands. They know that they drive for strategic posts in Greece and the Mediterranean, not because they love democracy, but because their supreme loyalty is to their oil wells in Saudi Arabia, and to their cartel investments in Germany, Japan, Franco Spain and Chiang Kai-shek China.

Others besides the American Communists will not be stampeded into abandoning their faith in the United Nations. They will condemn unilateral action that usurps the power or undermines the authority of the United Nations—whether that action is taken by the United States or by any other nation.

Millions of Americans will crack down hard on any administration or party that seeks to betray the aims for which the war was fought and the peace whose outlines Roosevelt made clear.

Not only the American Communists, but millions of other Americans advocate universal disarmament, a drastic reduction in our gigantic armaments program, the immediate destruction of our atom bomb stockpile and the outlawing of atomic weapons.

Neither we Communists nor these millions who work for peace oppose a strong national defense or wish to weaken our country in order to strengthen some other power. We and they know that America's national security does not rest on "secret weapons" but on policies which will promote a prosperous and anti-fascist America in a democratic and peaceful world.

The truths which Abraham Lincoln spoke in another hour of grave national crisis ring true for the America of today:

"What constitutes the bulwark of our own liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling sea coasts, our army and our navy. These are not our reliance against tyranny. All of those may be turned against us without making us weaker for the struggle. Our reliance is in the Love of Liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your doors. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage, and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you."

Gentlemen of the committee, I believe that Abraham Lincoln's words help nail the lie that we Communists are "foreign agents" — and at the same time make a very relevant comment on H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884.

FORCE AND VIOLENCE

It is of course also untrue that the Communist Party has ever in the past advocated, or advocates today, the use of force and violence either as a means for achieving governmental change or as a method of struggle for immediate economic or social gains by labor and the people's forces generally.

Here I ask leave to introduce into the record the questions recently asked me on this subject by the New York *Times*, and my answers. (Exhibit C.)

Congressman Sheppard's bill repeats this moth-eaten charge of force and violence. But H.R. 2122 offers no

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proof, and there is no proof that can be offered. Many attempts have been made in the press and the courts of this land to establish such proof, but every one of them has failed. In the twenty-eight years of our Party's existence, not a single American Communist has ever been proven or convicted of acting or conspiring to employ force and violence to overthrow the government of the United States. It is therefore obvious that such a charge cannot possibly be upheld against our Party as a whole.

I shall submit now for the record the full text of the Constitution of our Party. (Exhibit D.) I read now from Article IV, Section 10: "Every member is obligated to fight with all his strength against any and every effort, whether it comes from abroad or from within our country, to destroy the rights of labor and the people, or any section thereof, or to impose upon the United States the arbitrary will of any group or party or clique or conspiracy, thereby violating the unqualified right of the majority of the people to direct the destinies of our country."

I read also from Section 2 of Article IX: "Adherence to or participation in the activities of any clique, group, circle, faction or party which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy, whereby the American people can maintain their right to determine their destiny in any degree, shall be punished by immediate expulsion."

I wish to emphasize that it is precisely those who advocate the use of force and violence to overthrow the new democracies of Europe and to put down the national liberation movements of Asia, and who now seek to bring fascism to power in the United States—who accuse us Communists of wanting to overthrow the government of the United States by force and violence.

Force and violence are the weapons which have always been advocated and employed by those who resist basic social change. In American history, the classic examples of this are the British Tories and their American agents who resisted the national liberation movement of the thirteen colonies; and secondly the counter-revolution of the slaveocracy which forced the nation into Civil War.

Pro-fascist monopoly can not have its reactionary way in these United States without resorting to force and violence. And history has shown that, once fascism is entrenched in state power, the people have no other recourse but to overthrow it by force and violence.

The right to take such revolutionary measures when and if they become necessary is proclaimed as an American right in the Declaration of Independence. It was through the American people's exercise of this inalienable right that our nation was founded.

But fascism has not yet come to power in the United States. We Communists and millions of our fellow Americans are determined that it shall never come to power. That is why we Communists and other anti-fascist progressives urge that the American people unite in a broad labor and democratic coalition whose concerted, public, mass action can check and curb the imperialists and the reactionary monopolists and save our country from the hell of fascist terror.

Fascist terror is force and violence in their most brutal form. Where it reigns there can be no democratic and orderly progress.

Today, the way to democratic and orderly progress is to keep force and violence away from the factories by defeating the anti-labor legislation of the GOP and the Southern Bourbons.

Today, the way to democratic and orderly progress is to prevent a return of the force and violence which marked the Harding-Hoover period, by defeating the predatory post-World War II foreign and domestic policies of the trusts—which jeopardize the peace and hasten the coming of another economic crisis.

Today, the way to democratic and orderly progress is to stop the force and violence of American Action, Inc., of the KKK and the lynch mobs—by helping win equal rights for the Negroes and civil liberties for all.

Today, the way to democratic and orderly progress is to oppose the force and violence of imperialist expansion and atomic war which could bring nothing but ruin and tragedy to the United States and other peoples.

These are the ways of democratic and orderly progress which we American Communists advocate and take.

THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE

Now as to the third allegation, namely, that the American Communist Party is not a political party in the accepted sense, but a conspiracy. Rep. Mundt told the press on February 26 that this committee is endeavoring to prove the truth of this allegation.

This third allegation is as false as the other two which are lodged by the proponents of H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884. I ask leave to submit to this committee while these hearings are still in progress a list of the many Communists who have run for federal and state office, including the presidential Communist candidates in 1928, 1932, 1936 and 1940 and the number of votes received by each.

As is well known, there was no Communist presidential candidate in 1944. Communists in that crucial war year subordinated partisan interest to national unity, and worked actively for the electoral victory of our great wartime President, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In the 1946 elections we ran several dozen federal and state candidates and gave qualified or conditional support to pro-Roosevelt candidates. We campaigned actively and publicly for those candidates who had the united support of labor and all progressives, regardless of their party designation.

It is a matter of regret to us that the number of our candidates was not larger. We should like to contest many more offices, but unfortunately in some states, especially in the South, we have been unlawfully deprived of our electoral rights. Some other states, such as Illinois and California, have provisions which make it extremely difficult for the Communist Party or any minority or new party to get on the ballot.

In spite of discriminatory restrictions and persecution, our Communist candidates have not made a bad showing. Under the New York PR election system, the New York City Communist Councilman and outstanding Negro leader Benjamin J. Davis, Jr. received a total of 63,498 votes—56,129 being first choice votes. In contrast, in the 1st District of Mississippi—with a population of 263,377—the present incumbent, a member of this committee, whose right to office is contested, received a total of 5,429 votes.

New York City Communist Councilman Peter V. Cacchione, a veteran of World War I, received a total of 75,000 votes—66,496 being first choice votes. In contrast,

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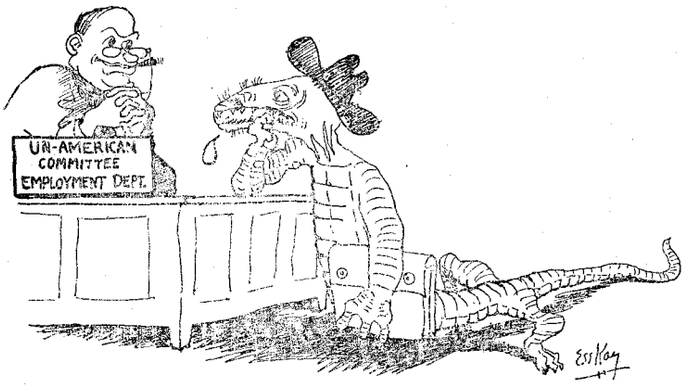
in the 9th District of Georgia, the incumbent, also a member of this committee, received a total of 14,815 votes out of a population of 235,420.

In comparing these figures, the committee will, of course, take into account that whereas there are six political parties on the New York ballot, Georgia and Mississippi are in effect states with a one-party system.

We Communists have never made any secret of the fact that our ultimate objective is socialism. But there is nothing in this fact to substantiate the charges that we are a "conspiracy," that we are "foreign agents," or that we advocate the "overthrow of the United States government by force and violence."

As American workers we strive publicly and by demo-



"Whaddya mean I ain't d my enough?"

cratic means to convince the American people that socialism is the only way to end the scourge of economic crisis, unemployment and violent class conflict. We strive to convince them that only socialism can once and for all put an end to reaction, fascism and war which are engendered by monopoly capitalism.

We Communists are confident that the day will come when the majority of Americans will decide by their own free choice, on the basis of their own experience and in harmony with their fundamental interests, to march forward along the road of social progress toward socialism—that is, to establish the common ownership of the national economy under a government of the people, led by the working class.

As Marxists, we know the road cannot be mapped out in advance. It will be prospected and cleared by the millions of democratic Americans who seek it. It will be an American road, opening new frontiers for the traditions of American democracy and built according to American specifications by the common people of America who develop further the democratic know-how which is ours.

Our path will not necessarily follow the twists and turns taken by the peoples of other countries who also, because of the inexorable logic of economic and social development, move toward a similar goal.

We Communists are not utopians, and come what may, we are not and never will be adventurers. Marxism and patriotism alike teach us that we must differentiate between what is possible today and what can be realized tomorrow.

The better and more progressive America toward which we strive can be built only by the American people, led by labor, and on the foundation of a stronger American democracy.

What kind of America do the proponents of this legislation want? They begin by demanding that the Communist Party be outlawed. That was how Hitler began. Shall we not conclude that they seek the end that Hitler sought?

THE MEN BEHIND IT ALL

And who are the proponents of this legislation? They include the NAM and the US Chamber of Commerce. Thus, they are the spokesmen for the big trusts who raked in $51,000,000,000 in war profits, and now want to destroy the labor movement so that their profiteering can go on without check. They are the Du Ponts, General Electric, Standard Oil, the Aluminum Corporation—and the rest of the cartellists for whom the war was just another big bankruptcy squeeze. Now that their Nazi and Japanese partner-competitors have been put through the wringer, the American monopolists dream of an imperialist "American Century," and seek to dominate the globe. The agents of the former Axis enemies in this country also support H.R. 2122, H.R. 1884, and similar proposed legislation.

During the war, Mr. J. Edgar Hoover and the Justice Department brought sixteen Red-baiting, labor-hating, anti-Semitic and anti-Negro seditionists to trial. Some of them had at one time or another appeared before this committee as friendly witnesses. I am sure they would be glad to repeat now their support for legislation to outlaw the Communist Party. The case against them was dropped like a hot potato. Now they are at liberty to appear and back up Mr. Edgar Hoover, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Sheppard and Mr. J. Parnell Thomas.

Thanks to Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Donald Day and Axis Sally are also at liberty. I think it vital that this committee ascertain and make public *their* views on outlawing the Communist Party. Their opinion should be of special interest to all rank-and-file members of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. For it was the GI's in the fox-holes who had to take Donald Day and Axis Sally along with Hitler's bombs and gunfire.

On July 5, 1945, the BBC reported the discovery of stacks of articles clipped from the Chicago *Tribune* and Hearst's *Journal-American* in the Nazi broadcasting station at Koenigswesterhausen. A typical item: "Mr. Roosevelt consistently stresses the interests and wishes of other nations without regard to his own." And another—beamed to German troops on Feb. 18, 1945: "Col. Robert McCormick is a lonely patriot who takes his responsibilities towards his country seriously. . . . He is prepared to go to Hell for his opinions — which are anti-Roosevelt, anti-British, anti-Bolshevik and anti-Semitic." The "lonely patriots" Hearst and McCormick are ardent backers of this legislation.

It is only four years since Franklin Roosevelt warned the Congress: "The philosophy of the Axis powers is based on profound contempt for the human race. If, in the formation of our future policy, we were guided by the same cynical contempt, then we should be surrendering to the philosophy of our enemies, and our victory would turn to defeat."

Today there exists in our country a dangerous conspiracy whose aim is to turn the anti-Axis victory into defeat, to destroy American democracy and put in its place an American form of fascism.

Those who organize this conspiracy fought Roosevelt

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(and labor) tooth and nail while he lived. They have involved in it the man who gave his solemn pledge to the American people that he would walk in Roosevelt's footsteps and continue Roosevelt's policies. But now this man, having labelled the Hoover-Dulles-Vandenberg policy of world domination the "Truman Doctrine," is hounding the ghost of Roosevelt's New Deal from all government agencies.

H.R. 2122 and H.R. 1884 play their part in the conspiracy to make America the land in which Roosevelt shall have become the forgotten man and his progressive and foreign policies the forbidden thought.

Do not these bills demand that the Communist Party be outlawed so that the pro-Roosevelt labor-democratic coalition can be outlawed? Do they not propose to ban all candidates who would preserve the Wagner Act and other New Deal legislation? Do they not imply that the Roosevelt who was the strategist of coalition warfare sold the nation to its staunchest and most heroic ally—the Soviet Union? Do they not imply that the war was won against the wrong enemy? Do they not seek to tear down the United Nations, whose architect was Roosevelt, and crumble in ruins its corner-stone of American-Soviet friendship?

It is only natural that we Communists should bear the first brunt of this current Red-baiting attempt to turn victory into defeat, to wipe out all memory of the war and the aims for which it was fought, and to rob the American people of Roosevelt's heritage. It is just as natural that this Un-American Committee, which gave aid and comfort to the Axis enemy during the war, should play a leading part in this postwar pro-fascist conspiracy.

But the lessons of the anti-Axis war and of Franklin Roosevelt's partnership with the common man live in the hearts and minds of the American people. The German people had no such reservoir or experience and strength to draw on when Hitler proclaimed his 1,000-year rule of terror, nor had the rest of the world's peoples. And yet—Hitler's Greater Reich lasted not 1,000 years, but twelve. It should be long remembered that those twelve years, so terrible for the people of Germany and of the world, were the same twelve years in which the German Communist Party was outlawed.

We American Communists are here to stay. We will endure as long as America's working people endure. Regardless of any repressive measures against our Party in violation of the Constitution and the basic democratic principles upon which our nation was founded—hundreds of thousands of American workers and progressives will learn to be American Communists. Their school is the struggle of America's common people against the American trusts and empire builders.

In the agony of his last torture, Galileo told his inquisitors, "the earth still moves." We Communists know that human society moves, and that it moves in the direction of democratic advance and social progress.

Here in our America we wish to move along democratic paths and by peaceful means.

We call on all Americans who share this wish, whatever may be their differences with us Communists on other questions, to oppose and work for the defeat of H.R. 1884, H.R. 2122 and all similar legislation. We call with confidence on all patriotic Americans to check the pro-fascist conspiracy which now menaces the Bill of Rights and the United Nations.

NOTES ON UN-AMERICANA

Flashlights boomed, policemen fussed about Dennis . . . Impressions of the hearing.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

As WITNESS to the increased stature of the Un-American Committee under a labor-hating Republican majority, the committee opened its hearings on the Rankin and Sheppard bills in brand-new, more elegant and spacious rooms. They are on the main floor of the old House Office Building, moreover, rather than the musty file-strewn top floor. Missing were such landmarks as the elaborate chart of the "Red network," an heirloom from the Dies committee which decorated most of one wall. Missing also was the cherubic countenance of Ernie Adamson, erstwhile counsel famed for scolding radio commentators for un-Americanism because they used the word "democracy." In his place, however, was another relic from the Dies committee fully as fabulous as the old "Red network" chart, but alive and spluttering venom at Communist Party General Secretary Eugene Dennis. On two occasions this former Dies investigator, Robert Stripling, a slim and sallow Goebbels, was prevented from fulfilling his plea to obtain draft deferment and work for the committee by the efforts of former Rep. J. Will Robinson and the wavering liberal element he influenced on the committee.

HERE and there in purely formal aspects the hearings revealed certain departures from the immediate past, when, under a gentleman's agreement, Rep. John S. Wood of Georgia nominally ran the committee but allowed John Rankin of Mississippi to have things his way except when the liberals rebelled, as was the case on the Hollywood report which was never issued. It was more like the old hilarious Dies hearings—with this difference, that in addition to a Republican majority, there was in the White House a President who had ordered 2,000,000 government workers investigated, in effect held to be disloyal until proved otherwise, instead of one who said, as Roosevelt did of the Dies committee:

"Most fair-minded Americans hope that the committee will abandon the practices of merely providing a forum to those who for political purposes or otherwise seek headlines which they could not otherwise obtain. Mere opinion evidence has been barred in court since the American system of legisla-

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tive and judicial procedure was started. . . . I was disturbed . . . because a congressional committee, charged with the responsibility of investigating un-American activities, should have permitted itself to be used in a flagrantly unfair and un-American attempt to influence an election."

WHEN last year spectators in the hearing room applauded the fascist fuehrer Gerald L. K. Smith they were instructed to abstain from applause by the then chairman, Rep. Wood. But when Chairman Thomas, willing to question Dennis about his name but unwilling to hear him testify on the pending legislation, ordered him served with a subpoena and excused for the day, and there was applause, the chairman made no move to stop it. Flashlights boomed, policemen fussed about Dennis, who brushed them aside, as he ignored the subpoena; photographers climbed over tables to get to the door, reporters surged after the broad back of the Communist official and all the obscene hubbub of the old Dies performances was in evidence. Its thirst for blood abated by Chairman Thomas' purely theoretical drawing of blood, as witness Dennis remained smilingly immune to the members' attacks, the crowd dispersed, some laughing, some vaguely disappointed. But the crowd also included others sympathetic to Dennis.

LATER Dennis told reporters that even had his name been Feeney and he had legally changed it to Thomas, as was the case with the chairman of the committee, he should be judged by his record and not his name. When asked by a reporter why he had asked to testify before the committee, though he challenged its authority, he explained it was because it was the only way he could testify on the pending bills.

The bills immediately before the committee are two. The Rankin bill (HR 1884) provides a prison term of up to ten years and/or a fine up to $10,000 for teachers in public or private schools if they "express or convey the impression of sympathy with or approval of, communism or Communist ideology," and for anyone who attempts to send through the mails any publication, including any letter or writing, of the same character. It would carry the same penalty for any Communist filing for public office, federal or state. The Sheppard bill (HR 2122) provides prison terms up to five years and fines up to $10,000, or both, for any person "to be a member of the Communist Party."

RELIEVED of the necessity of putting up a judicious front, the old chairman, Rep. John S. Wood of Georgia, came out in his true colors. To James O'Neil, one of three American Legion witnesses and a police chief in Manchester, N. H., he addressed this question: "What are the essential differences between communism and fascism?" And at the reply, "I could say there aren't too many essential differences—I would say there aren't any," Rep. Wood leaned back in apparent satisfaction.

But he exceeded even this when AFL President William Green was in the witness chair facing the half-circle of publicity-hungry inquisitors who peered down at him from the committee dais. While his statement contained fulsome Red-baiting passages, Green opposed the bills as inconsistent with the Constitution and provocative of witch-hunts, and, in the case of the Rankin bill, a dangerous threat to academic freedom and freedom of the press.

The Congressmen then pounced on him. When Green insisted that Communists claim that overthrowing the government "must be done by peaceful means," and cited their political activity as the means, Rep. Wood said elegantly, "But you and I agree that is not so. A polecat might deny he had an odor. I daresay you never heard a murderer go on trial who didn't deny the murder." Green stared at the Congressman and faltered, "But you still believe a man should be given a fair trial?" "Oh yes," said Wood impatiently. "Then how would you have evidence?" Green asked wonderingly. "That's a matter for the courts to decide," said the former Georgia backwoods county judge airily.

REP. RICHARD M. NIXON, who represents the California district where citrus growing isn't farming but an industry—even his office staff calls it "our biggest industry"—is on the House Labor and Education Committee as well as the Un-American. He is thirty-four, a smooth, sombre-looking young man who, when he smiles, lifts his upper lip from his teeth without altering the brooding expression of his deepset eyes. A biographical sketch his office supplied on request stated he is "the possessor of marked legislative ability."

In some of his campaign literature obtained from his office was mention, too, of his criticism of the administration for not providing enough housing for vets. I asked his secretary, since Rep. Nixon was too busy to see me, if he had done anything about housing since being here. The only things I had read about him were related to so-called Communists in labor organizations. "I don't think so," she said

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in a tone of reproof. "I don't see how he'd have time. The two committees take all his time."

WHILE I was waiting to try to see Rep. Nixon after one session I could not help but overhear snatches of conversation he had with two men who, according to his office, were discussing a broadcast scheduled for that evening. "Safeguards," he said thoughtfully at one time, and agreed he would talk about safeguards. "Of course that word 'sympathy' is the most difficult one legally." Again, ruminatively, "No, they don't like a secret police, they don't like a Gestapo." The main thing, he observed forcefully at another point, "is to show the danger of front organizations."

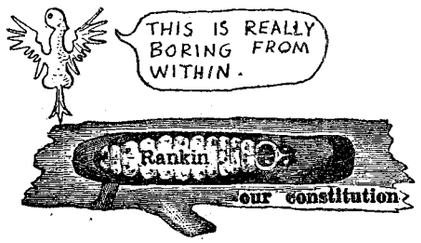
FOR browsing about, few spots in Washington are better these days than the new office of the Un-American Committee, with several copies of the *Daily Worker* around, and *Mainstream* prominently displayed. It was disappointing not to find NEW MASSES there too, but maybe the Congressional Library is to blame. Last time someone in Chairman Thomas' office asked me to send him the story of an interview with the chairman, I asked why the committee didn't get NM. In the old days it did, she said—"but the Congressional Library waited until they were bound before sending them to the committee." Which is one way to keep the magazine off library shelves here.

[Editor's Note.—Don't fret, Virginia. Just a few days ago the Un-American Committee renewed its subscription to NM.]

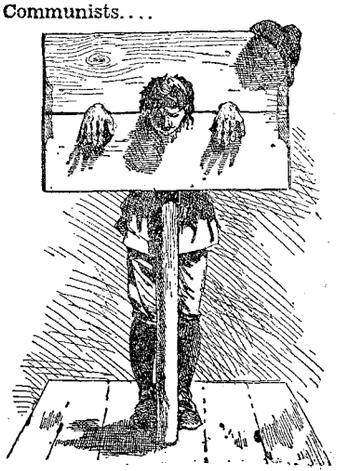
REP. RICHARD VAIL, the open-shop Illinois steel manufacturer, made a serious slip on one occasion as he questioned the aged AFL head. This representative of a district heavily populated by foreign born asked if "any alien who becomes a citizen and then embraces communism" shouldn't forfeit his citizenship rights. Green replied that free speech and free press were involved, that even aliens were entitled to free speech and freedom of the press. "Of course, if they advocated directly overthrow of the government by force and violence—" Green began. But Rep. Vail interrupted brusquely: "But as a Communist doesn't do that—." His admission that Communists do not in fact do what is charged against them went unnoticed.

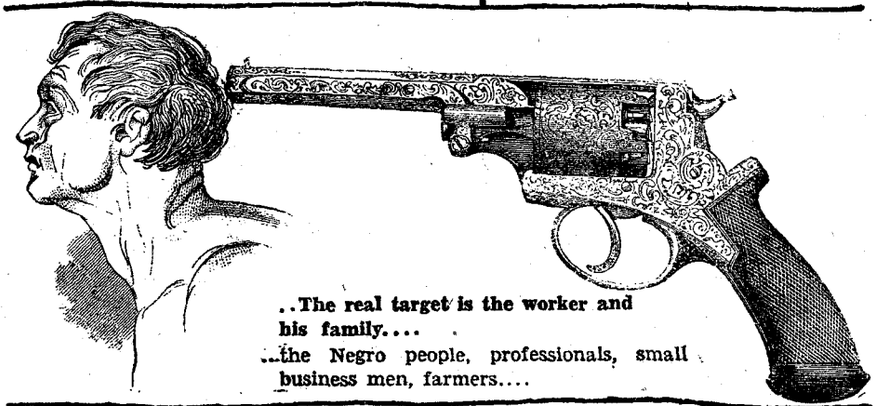
On Safari With Harari

....President Truman's executive order for "loyalty" tests ....has taken a long step in the direction of completely subverting the constitutional safeguards provided for the rights of the common people....



....This unprecedented peacetime rule by decree is not aimed just 2,200,000 federal workers or at the Communists....

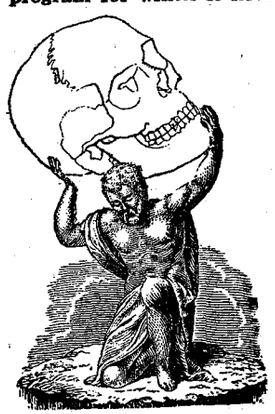


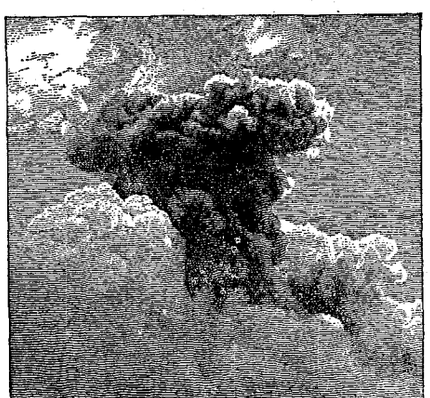


..The real target is the worker and his family....
...the Negro people, professionals, small business men, farmers....

....Retreat before "anti-Communist" inquisitions has always meant a retreat into police state surveillance and subjection....

....the administration, to the applause of the Republican Party, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce, finds it necessary to club an unwilling public into acceptance of a program for which it never voted....





.. They want to dominate every part of the world and would use the atom bomb, American dollars, U. S. war supplies and also troops to secure such world domination.....

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PARIS LETTER

by Claude Morgan

Paris.

THERE is a sharpness of spring in the air. Paris has emerged from the winter with a remarkable exhibition by the painter Marcel Gromaire, whose art is saturated with human feeling. Gromaire has retained a geometric style which he uses to express powerfully the rhythm of the world.

The finest painting at this exhibition shows a plow in the foreground, in somber colors. The efforts of the horse and the farm-worker are portrayed with striking truthfulness. Their silhouette is set against a background of tilled earth bathed in the dazzling light of a rising sun.

No doubt it is a banal theme, one that has given rise to horrible commonplaces. Nevertheless, with this banal theme Gromaire has expressed, in an art adapted to our times, the grim effort of the man of today and his hope in "singing tomorrows."

I have also visited Picasso's studio, which right now is bursting with creative activity. For years, from the period of "Guernica" in the Thirties to the more recent period of "Charnel-Houses," Picasso was obsessed with the horrors of a monstrous world. At present he is turning toward joy. He has painted several panels for the old museum of Antibes. I could only see photographic reproductions of them, but they all express *elan*, joyousness, love. But he also has in his studio a number of new canvases showing night-birds. One of them depicts a barn-owl perched on the back of a wooden bench in the hallway of an old building. It seems so amazingly real that one feels the urge to touch the objects so as to feel their contours.

"A picture portraying a bunch of leeks must have the smell of leeks," Picasso told me, "otherwise it's not worth painting."

He also told me: "I feel that I have never been unreal. At the time when surrealism was born, what I understood by that word was 'more real than the real'."

A book on Picasso has just come out, written by his close friend Sabartes, who has known him for forty years. It is a good book because Sabartes does not go in for literary effects and because he never separates Picasso the man from his work as a painter. The book shows what constitutes the charm and vitality of Pablo Picasso: a powerful sense and penetrating vision of the real going hand in hand with the unique freshness he has retained since childhood and which so few men have been able to keep as they mature. That is what makes Picasso both simple and shrewd—simple as a creator, as a peasant, as a worker, and shrewd as a man who must constantly defend his freedom against other men. This book helps one to understand Picasso and I hope that it may one day be translated in the United States.

THE past month, February, has been marked by two events: the strike of the Paris press and the revival of fascist activity.

As I write, Paris has been without newspapers for twenty-seven days, without news items, *feuilletons* or want ads.* The radio broadcasts the news but we French need the printed word. So there were no papers to comment on the Anglo-French treaty, a treaty which, as the French people have so often made clear, does not form the first link in a dangerous Western bloc but one of the elements which, with the Franco-Soviet and Anglo-Soviet pacts, enters into the United Nations structure for organizing the peace.

The editorial offices of the newspapers are completely deserted. The only ones on hand are those who really have journalism in their blood and cannot live without smelling printer's ink. They wander about, completely at a loss. The fine sketcher Gassier does not even have the heart to drink the tiniest glass of Beaujolais wine. . . . But it is a very trying moment for the Resistance papers which have no banks or financial combines to support them—one feels that the old corrupt press of pre-war days is lurking in the shadows, awaiting its opportunity.

As for the fascists, they are beginning to raise their voices a little too loudly. At a meeting held in a Paris theater, one could hear raucous shouts of acclaim for Marshal Petain and cries of: "Death to the Jews!" and "Back to Buchenwald and Auschwitz!" That proves that the purge of fascists—which some people abroad had violently assailed for its alleged excesses—has not been carried out; and it should give food for thought to those—and there were some in the United States—who sharply criticized the condemnation of Petain.

When a second fascist meeting was announced for one of the biggest halls in Paris, the trade unions and working-class parties organized a tremendous counter-demonstration to prevent the fascists from entering the hall. Faced with this threat, the extreme Rightist group, which had organized the first meeting, called the second one off. But since no newspapers appeared, a number of counter-demonstrators who had not been informed in time appeared on the scene. All evening long they milled around the closed gates of the Salle Wagram. This is the first time since liberation that the people of Paris have been called upon to express their will by an act. Paris cannot—two years after the return of our deportees from Nazi concentration camps—allow madmen and criminals to revive the racist slogans of Dr. Goebbels.

THE lecture by Georges Bernanos** in the large amphitheater of the Sorbonne was an unpleasant event. Bernanos likes to speak to the youth and when he does, he always insults them. For it is insulting the youth to tell them that Frenchmen "should put their fingers in their mouths to make themselves vomit" when so many young people fell in the Resistance movement so that France might live. To deny the heroism of French youth when one has been in Brazil throughout the war is hateful; but to attribute all of man's difficulties to the machine and the machine-age is, for an adult, simply stupid. Yet that is just what Bernanos did throughout his lecture.

But rest assured: Paris will not, to please him, return to conceptions of the Middle Ages.

(*Translated by John Rossi*)

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* The strike was settled several days later.—***Ed.***

** Prominent French Catholic writer.

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review and comment

FREEDOM UNLIMITED

Complete independence of the universe is the mirage to which Sartre's hero aspires.

By LOUIS HARAP

NO EXIT *and* THE FLIES, *by Jean-Paul Sartre. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. Knopf.* $2.50.

THOUGH existentialism has become old hat in Paris, according to Claude Morgan (NEW MASSES, February 4), it has been catching on elsewhere. There are now small, ardent groups of existentialists in various colleges here. Performances of Sartre's plays by little theater groups throughout the country are in prospect. And abroad, a philosophical body of the Vatican will hold a seminar on the subject during Easter week in Rome. Newspaper speculation has it that the seminar will probably condemn Sartre's atheism, but approve some theistic form of existentialism.

Among Sartre's versatile talents, his indubitable gift for the theater is the strongest propellent of existentialism today. The publication of two plays of his in English, supplemented by translations of his fiction and philosophical writings, may be expected to increase his vogue among intellectuals here.

No Exit has been discussed at some length in America and I touched on it in an earlier article (NM, Dec. 31, 1946). In this review, therefore, I shall confine my comment to the less familiar *The Flies*. The play is an existentialist variation of the ancient Orestes legend. From the beginnings of the drama in Greece, this theme has haunted the theater. The greatest Greek tragedians wrote an Orestes cycle, each with his own emendations. *Hamlet* is a variation on the same theme, as Gilbert Murray has shown, tracing its common origin with the Greek plays to the primeval ritual battle of summer and winter, life and death. Subsequent eras have clothed the legend in their own ideological garments in the theater. In America O'Neill explored the psychoanalytical import of the theme in his *Mourning Becomes Electra*. Christopher Caudwell clothed the theme in the radical disillusionment of the Thirties in his satirical poetic drama, *Orestes*, which should be better known and placed beside satires by the Auden school of that decade.

In *The Flies*, Orestes returns to his native Argos fifteen years after the murder of his father Agamemnon by Aegisthus, aided by Clytemnestra, Orestes' mother. These two have since reigned over Argos despotically. Orestes' sister, Electra, has lived in bitterness, awaiting the return of Orestes to avenge their father's death. Argos is meanwhile plagued by flies, which symbolize the forces of oppression. Orestes is at first reluctant to remain in the unhappy, plague-ridden city, but is awakened to his duty by Electra. This act symbolizes the assertion of his freedom. He murders Aegisthus and Clytemnestra and thereby frees the city. But the people turn against him and he is forced to flee the city. He feels no remorse at his matricide, which is a confirmation of his absolute freedom of will; but Electra is obsessed with guilt at the murder of their mother. When Orestes leaves he takes with him the plague of flies from which he has freed the city. Throughout the play moves Jupiter, "god of flies and death," who is Orestes' real antagonist in the contest for control of his will. Orestes wins out because Jupiter has no power over an existentially "free" man. Freedom, according to Sartre, is an absolute, higher even than the gods, and Orestes can defy Jupiter because he is an absolutely free man. Existentialist "freedom" is thus an apotheosis of the will.

This bare sketch of the plot can only suggest the heavy weight of symbolism carried by the play. This symbolism operates on two levels: it refers to the French Resistance under Nazi occupation, and to existentialist theory. *The Flies* was first produced in Paris in 1943 and the play bristles with signs of it. It seems to me a far more effective resistance play than *No Exit*, which was also first produced under the Nazis a year later. *The Flies* is full of allusions that must have inspired the Parisians. The whole play is a glorification of individual acts of violence against oppressors. I shall give here only a few of the numerous allusions to resistance. The ubiquitous flies which pestered the city symbolize the Nazis. One citizen says of the flies, "Every year they're getting nastier and nastier"; a soldier says, "If the flies were killed off, we'd have some peace." Jupiter says in one place, "That's right. Show your mettle! Resist! Resist!" Aegisthus clearly stands for the Vichyite; for example, he says, "I have lived without love, without hope, even without lust. But I have kept order. Yes, I have kept good order in my kingdom." The murder of Aegisthus in the second act and the frequent talk about freeing the city in the third must have had an unmistakable meaning to Parisians. The play is full of these cryptic allusions to the occupation and resistance.

THE play's contribution to the resistance, however, is now a settled matter of history. It should not blind

JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH

We pay homage to Jean-Richard Bloch, Communist, Counselor of the French Republic, director of the newspaper *Ce Soir*, defender of France against her traitors and the German fascists, and eminent writer and journalist, who died suddenly of a heart attack on March 15 in Paris.

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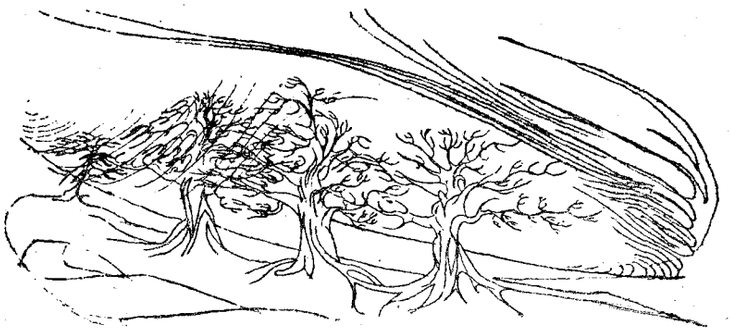
us to the postwar role of the play and its significance in our time. The wartime audience probably did not bother about the existentialist sense of the play: it must have interpreted the play's insistence on the theme of "freedom" according to the political urgency of the day. But for us the existentialist level of the symbolism is most significant. The central notion of the play is the discovery of individual "freedom" as an absolute, the highest value, taking the traditional place of God in men's lives. The "freedom" of Sartre is not political or social, but metaphysical: it is a transcendent state of individual consciousness and not part of a scheme of political and social relations. It gives the individual an absolute, metaphysical self-dependence.

On the philosophical level the conflict of the play is between Jupiter, who stands for all the forces which control man, and Orestes, who is fighting his way through to his complete independence of the whole universe. In the third act Orestes challenges Jupiter's power over him. "I *am* my freedom," says Orestes. "No sooner had you created me than I ceased to be yours. . . . Suddenly, out of the blue, freedom crashed down on me and swept me off my feet. Nature sprang back, my youth went with the wind, and I knew myself utterly alone in the midst of this well-meaning little universe of yours." To be free, then, is to be "utterly alone." Orestes accepts the consequences, which are, in Jupiter's words: "Your vaunted freedom isolates you from the fold; it means exile"—from society. This is the Nietzschean strain in existentialism, the exaltation of the individual, beyond good and evil; or, as Orestes says, when he discovered freedom, "there was nothing left in heaven, no right or wrong."

This Nietzschean aspect of the play gives the clue to its ultimate anti-progressive nature. Freedom is bestowed upon the people by Orestes, the "free" individual—they play no part in their own salvation. In fact, the people turn against Orestes, their liberator, after he has murdered Aegisthus, their oppressor, and Orestes is forced to flee their wrath. For Sartre the freeing of the people becomes secondary, on the philosophical plane, to the personal "freedom" of Orestes. Political and social material becomes for Sartre primarily a means for exploring the existentialist consciousness. The obscurantist elements of the play become particularly clear in Orestes' attitude toward nature. Instead of regarding nature as something to be mastered for man's well-being, the existentialist rejects it in favor of his Nietzschean absolute independence and freedom. Orestes describes himself as "outside nature, against nature, without excuse, without remedy, except what remedy I find within myself."

No, hope for the theater today does not lie in the direction Sartre has taken. We cannot share the current unqualified admiration of his talent. In times like ours, when the welfare of the majority of the people all over the world is at stake, such an art for art's sake attitude is an irresponsible luxury. Those who have a firm, responsible belief in the people and in democracy will understand the ultimately retrograde nature of Sartre's drama.



George Morris.

China Resists

LOOK SOUTH TO THE POLAR STAR, *by Holger Cahill. Harcourt, Brace.* $3.

THIS complex 554-page book was written by a former chief of the WPA Arts Project who is also a long-time student of Chinese culture and a friend of the Chinese people. It really comprises several entities. Seen in one aspect it is a novel dealing with China on the eve of Pearl Harbor. Seen in another it is an attempt to compare the philosophical traditions of the West and the Far East by projecting them through the prisms of esthetic canons, history, ideas of military strategy and the contemporary political and personal behavior of people and individuals. Finally it is an argument for the desirability of some sort of intellectual synthesis of the two cultures.

All the different planes on which the book proceeds are brought to a focus in the figure of Lewis Teigne, an American scholar who has spent some years in a Chinese village and is the living example of this synthesis. Teigne himself never appears in the book but is nevertheless its main character. What ties the plot, and the other characters, together is the connecting thread of his seemingly mysterious activities, and the gradual revelation of his motives. Love of peace, of compromise and of his fellow man, in the style of the Chinese sages, first leads Teigne into an attempt to talk the Japanese occupying army out of its evil ways. The Japanese, having turned traitor to these Oriental values, pay no heed. Teigne's devotion to harmony and justice then cause him to identify himself completely with the military and political needs of the guerrillas north of Shanghai, who are auxiliaries to the Communist-led New Fourth Army.

Thought and action with him are one (though it is not made clear whether this characteristic, as distinct from the mode of his action, is seen as a product of the Western or Eastern components of his thinking, or a combination of the positive aspects of both). He deceives the Japanese, prevents a clash between Kuomintang and Communist-led troops which the Japanese try to engineer through his mediumship, and pays with his life. Significantly, Shao Liu, the guerrilla commander of the troops the American assists, is Teigne's former servant, who has also been a farm-laborer, ricksha coolie and private soldier. The abstract scholar fulfills himself, and his philosophy through service to the resurgent common people, the "nobodies" who, in an old Chinese phrase, "are the foundation of the state."

The characters are half individuals and half symbols. The only one whose inner workings we are shown is Ryall, a well-meaning young American who suffers from pallor of the will and pas-

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sions. He assists Farjohn, a US naval intelligence agent who, despite his professional suspicion and the military coarseness of some of his perceptions, respects facts and understands where the interests of his country lie. Farjohn learns about popular movements, perceives that civil war in China would be a calamity for America, and aids the guerrillas, in defiance of protocol, before Pearl Harbor, which comes as a final chord to the book. Ailes Teigne, the professor's daughter, does the same out of stubborn decency, and Armin, a cynical art dealer who thinks he is only earning an honest penny in an exchange of antiques for arms, finds his sympathies more with China than he cares to admit. Hanau, another American, fought in Spain and represents the unity of conscious anti-fascists everywhere. Ranged against these are not only Chinese traitors, Japanese gendarmes and Axis spies, some with a fine Trotskyite demagogic line, but other Americans. Some Shanghai businessmen are convinced that Japan will do business if not interfered with. And there is a fine bit on an American scholar-prostitute of the type that hang around Chiang Kai-shek: "Dr. Schmucker. Used to be a Chungking economic adviser. Writes learned articles to prove that the peasant who has lost his land to the tax farmer is better off than the man who still hangs on to it."

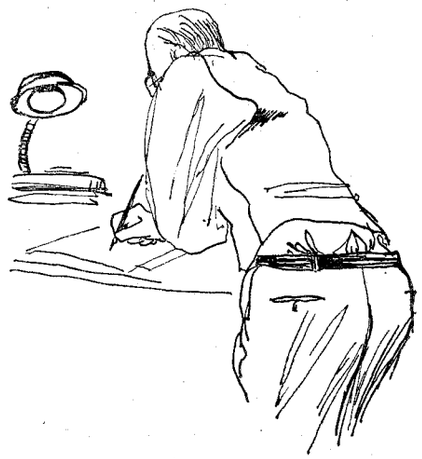
Since most of the ideas are brought out in conversations, these characters often drown in an ocean of dialogue. One of the structural weaknesses of the book is that the dialogue runs away from its utterers. Even Farjohn will suddenly start quoting the ancient classics. At one point a Chinese soldier, the Americans and a White Russian employe of Farjohn's engage in complex verbal interchange without any indication of what language is being spoken. With so many haphazardly gathered Shanghai foreigners it couldn't possibly be Chinese. By contrast, the author sometimes goes to such great pains to achieve phonetic naturalism in imitating the English of Russians, Japanese, Eurasians and cockneys, that one cannot tell what is said without reading the passage aloud.

As distinct from the foreign actors, the Chinese guerrillas, who act more and talk less, stand out sharply and vividly. One can actually see men like Shao Liu, the Hunanese soldier Mao, Sergeant Yun and a traitor colonel.

It seems to me that the influence of the national cultural tradition on the specific forms of the Chinese struggle is not realistically treated. It is an extremely important subject, and it reflects great credit on Mr. Cahill that he has spent so much labor in trying to define it. But the minds of contemporary Chinese cannot be depicted by putting the classics into their mouths, as though conscious historic memory animated their every action, any more than one can make contemporary Americans come alive by filling their talk with the Bible, the Magna Carta, Patrick Henry and Abe Lincoln.

In the modern political sphere, too, the author makes some errors. His portrait of the guerrillas is sympathetic, lively and sufficiently faithful in external aspects. But his preoccupation with the specifically Chinese, and with the contrast between appearance and reality that he sees everywhere, leads him astray. For instance, Shao Liu, the commander, is a model of the common man of China, but a political commissar who appears at one point is an estimable lightweight who is so preoccupied with Marxist sloganeering that he must always admit his surprise at how the unlettered guerrilla makes Marxism come out in practice. This is a serious distortion. While it is true that the awakening people of China supplied the great richness of her forms of struggle from many deep wellsprings of fortitude and tradition, it was Marxist leadership, and the gradual injection of Marxist consciousness into their own minds, that dug the channels for those renewing waters. The commissars of the New Fourth and Eighth Route armies are not fussbudgets but leaders; the partnership of Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh is repeated, and recreated, at all levels. Many revolutionary years have made commanders and commissars interchangeable in function—the commissar often leads in battle and the commander in the political ploughing which helps the seeds of the people's strength to sprout.

Another indication of insufficient study of the concrete circumstances of guerrilla warfare against the Japanese is the depiction of a propaganda play in which the peasant *vs.* landlord struggle is the exclusive theme. From 1936 to 1945 the enfranchising of the peasant and the economic lightening of his burdens was an indispensable motor of the national fight against Japan. But



Irene Goldberg.

the motor was not allowed to run away without the car. Agitation and propaganda to which the anti-Japanese theme was not central did not occur. There is a confusion of periods which, if the Chinese people's leaders had committed it, would have played into the hands of the enemy.

The overloading of the book makes it hard to read at times. But despite this, and despite the errors we have listed, the effect of the whole is to give a good picture of the internal and international circumstances of China's fight, and to show why the Chinese people will never lose. The conception is a noble one and the book, as one reviewer remarked, is worthy of attention as the first serious foreign attempt at the depiction of the Chinese revolution in novel form since Malraux's *Man's Fate*.

The vivid descriptions of locale and atmosphere in intrigue-laden Shanghai and the wartorn countryside, and the meaningful change of pace and tone as the characters are brought from one into the other, are particularly meritorious. They not only satisfy the mind's eye but add more to understanding than many of the philosophical asides.

NORMAN EBERHARDT.

With Salt

CROSS SECTION 1947, *edited by Edwin Seaver. Simon & Schuster.* $3.50.

THIS is the third *Cross Section* Edwin Seaver has edited, selecting prose and verse from 7,000 manuscripts. It is a collection which stands up well in comparison with other anthologies and is more honest and significant than the majority. Young

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writers are here, poets and story tellers, some appearing in print for the first time. Seaver must be given a warm hand for his judicious selections, his herculean and painstaking efforts, and his attempt in the foreword to flash the jacklight and bag for us some of the reasons literary efforts have been so puny in the gloomy postwar period in which we find ourselves.

In a number of reviews of this *Cross Section* the poets have either been ignored or given a back seat. Yet I have found at least three poets whose contributions bear rereading and study. They are Thomas McGrath, A. M. Krich and Vincent Ferrini, with whose work NEW MASSES readers are familiar. I liked McGrath's "Come Into the Garden":

When I was seventeen the world looked in
On a technicolor nightmare of sex and depression.
Whores sang in the tree, tramps in the midnight alley,
And farmers sang in the hills in the WPA wagons.

And his "Cradle Song With Light Machine Guns" has an unusual cutting edge and tenderness.

Ferrini's "Who Could Have Been a Man" is one of the most successful of his poems that I have seen: the imagery does not lump and choke the reader; it has been mixed with the other ingredients, has been kneaded and pounded well. Krich is represented by "The Shameful Museum" and "The Man in the Oxygen Tent" and though his ideas are sometimes crudely and harshly expressed as if in the working out his gears had difficulty meshing, they carry their load to their destination.

In Krich as in Ferrini and McGrath you have, I believe, the most important verse of the *Cross Section* poets, and this appears to be related to the fact that their work shows them to be most sensitive to the contemporary tumult. Their words flash and throw back a glow and heat coming from the great fires raging on the horizon. There are arresting phrases, the precipitate found in all real poetry, and if there is bitterness, it is the bitterness found in the concentrate, in the tight seeds of their thinking and feeling thrusting out into a hard world.

There is much meat in the story line in this collection, and a variety of cuts. Most numerous are the stories of servicemen. Ann Petry's illuminating story of a riot in Harlem is one of the strong Negro stories. There are tales of the farm, the sea, longshoremen, a gangster story by Meridel LeSueur. "The Lord's Day" by J. F. Powers gives a devastating picture of a Sunday in a convent. Indeed this collection, particularly in its fiction, covering a wide range in its themes and treatments, does represent a cross-section of the American scene.

Most of the fiction has the salt of life; it is not twitched off the skin by the writers. An excellent example of this vigorous realism, of fine visualization, is Hugh Rockwell's "Young Herbert." With few exceptions the stories reveal high technical skill. Where the elements in the narrative are not fused and transformed in the firepot as in Pereda's "The Pilgrim Heart," the story remains interesting because of the richness of the materials. The writers know their people. Meridel LeSueur produces one of her better stories, although as a rule she finds it difficult to create character objectively; her wheel throws off figures of the same size, shape and density, propelled by her preconceived notions about people and the wishes of her good heart.

Cross Section carries no criticism, and in his foreword Seaver comments on this lack. He finds that literary criticism is of a low order, that the best of the older writers are passing out of the picture, the writers who are filling in the vacuum are more concerned with the glitter in the market than with honest practice of their craft. He is not, however, one of the Cassandras and Calamity Janes stumbling through the valley of dead bones, for though he takes a gloomy view of what is being produced by the successful writers he does not despair of the newcomers, believing that we must turn to the younger writers who will create their own critics.

Seaver has done us a service by emphasizing the crisis in American letters and by pointing to the almost complete lack of an authoritative criticism. In doing so, he lashes out at Archibald MacLeish and Van Wyck Brooks. He recalls the "political offensive" which both launched against our best writers at the beginning of the war for so demoralizing the American people that they were unprepared for the crisis. He accuses these two "moralists" of trying to repudiate American between-the-war literature and trying to create a new literature by fiat.

In MacLeish's "Irresponsibles" and Brooks' "Opinions of Oliver Allston," you do get an appalling exhibition of twisted thinking by two of our most important men of letters. MacLeish held that the writers had divided themselves into two castes, two cults—the scholar and the writer, neither accepting responsibility for the common culture and for its defense. In his plea for the writers to assume a wholeness and singleness of purpose in their work, MacLeish nowhere indicates an understanding that the writers live in a world torn by class conflicts, that because of the division of labor they are often cut off from the healthiest forces in society, that they themselves are split, quartered, diced men and women trying to function in their craft under the most heartbreaking of conditions.

MacLeish is led astray by his poetic metaphysical approach to history, but in Brooks' case the confusion is shocking inasmuch as here we have a critic who professes to be a socialist. But his is a socialism which has its main roots somewhere in the clouds rather than in good, solid, well-manured American soil. For it is the kind of socialism which naively considered dialectical materialism a foreign importation, and which urged the proletarian mind to study the everyday people of Maine in order to acquire the worthiest values in our life. Brooks' thinking is of a piece with Robert Frost's when he said there was no place for a Dostoyevsky in America, and it exhibits the mechanics and the domestic economy of the rural mind.

It must be said, however, that with all the shallowness and narrowness of their approach to the question of the responsibility of literature to society, both of these men were honestly concerned over our moral health. They supported the war wholeheartedly, believing it to be a great spiritual adventure, and they remain to this day in the camp of the anti-fascists and Roosevelt New Dealers. They have not made their peace with the ideologists of our rampant imperialism like the *Partisan Review* gang, nor are they quaking in their boots before the spectacle of an approaching political and economic debacle, prepared to flee to the storm cellars. And so it is compounding confusion for Seaver to appeal to James Farrell in this controversy over the "irresponsibles" since the Farrells are not to be trusted; industrious as dung beetles, they will go to almost any lengths to foul and split

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the forces on which hang the fate not only of our literature but our democracy as well.

If it is true that 1946 was not a banner year for American letters and that some of the deficiencies in *Cross Section* indicate it, at least one reason is clear. Our young writers are trying to find leverage and footing in a society where the foulest betrayals of the people are justified by slogans of democracy and individual liberty. They have yet to learn not to take lessons in ethics from atomic thugs and Wall Street barbarians. A powerful story in *Cross Section* is "Stalies," by Terry Morris. This tells how a little boy allows himself to be violated by a tramp for a half dollar so that his gang can buy "stalies," stale pies at the bakery store. Too long have American writers allowed themselves to be violated and outraged in a society bossed by moral hooligans.

It is for the writers now, particularly the younger ones who have gone through the war, to stand up, to become the stormy petrels and the firebrands. It is for the writers to help save our country and our people without whom our writing isn't worth a damn. It is for them now to rouse up and save themselves as artists and men.

BEN FIELD.

Italy's Liberators

THE SOWING OF THE SEED, *by Ezio Taddei. Dial.* $3.

WHEN a man has spent eighteen years of his life in fascist jails, it seems remarkable that he should now, at the age of more than forty-five, be just beginning a literary career. It seems more remarkable yet that he should begin it with novels as arresting as this, his second to appear in translation. One feels a little startled —and tremendously encouraged—by such indications as the film *Open City*, and Taddei's novels—by the suddenness with which, after a quarter-century of slow death, the creative energies of fascism's longest-suffering victims have come to life again.

Of course, the liberation had been many years in preparation. How it was prepared is the theme of *The Sowing of the Seed*. The description is such as we should be likely to get only from a man as wholly engaged in the anti-fascist struggle as Taddei himself. *The Sowing of the Seed* reveals a phase of Italy's history about which most Americans know all too little—necessarily, because it was a secret one. It deals with the long struggle against black-shirt rule of an underground movement led by forces such as those of the Italian Communist Party. That struggle, we learn, did not spring into being when the Allied troops marched into Italy. It had grown up many years before, at the very onset of fascism.

The search for its origins carries Taddei back to the last years of World War I, when the seed was sown in the bitter soil of a war-weary land. Mussolini's march on Rome was engineered by native and foreign finance capital, but Taddei also reveals what led up to this crucial episode in the life of the Italian people. The disillusionment of the soldiers, the insecurity of the middle class, the poverty of the workers—we see all this in a series of brief insights into individual lives. There are those who will turn to fascism, such as the sadistic army officer, Carlo Conti, who cannot stop himself from striking one of his men in the face, and those who will passively condone it, such as the harassed schoolteacher, Domenico Iraci, who communicates his own fearful insecurity to his wife and daughter. There are also those who will join the opposition, such as Corrado Macaluso, the wounded veteran who cannot marry Giuseppina Iraci because his future prospects are too indifinite, and Beppino Colantuoni, the disabled foundry worker's son who becomes a blacksmith's apprentice and first hears of socialism when he picks up a leaflet denouncing the war.

Fifteen years later, we see the same characters on the eve of Italy's conquest of Ethiopia. Carlo Conti is now a fascist stool-pigeon, bribed with a government position as Rome's Superintendent of Supplies to inform on his former army comrades; in his capacity as inspector of milk depots, he carries his contempt for his fellow men to the length of indulging in milk baths with a female employe at one of the depots, as a result of which playful habit Rome suffers a typhoid epidemic. Insecure as ever, the Iraci family are even more hopeless than before, with unmarried Giuseppina on their hands; and when Conti makes himself agreeable, in the hope of securing information about her former lover, Macaluso, who is suspected of being an underground leader of the Communist Party, they abase themselves before him in their eagerness to improve their situation. As for Macaluso, who is a member of the Communist leading committee in Milan, his path now crosses that of the former blacksmith's apprentice, Beppino Colantuoni, who has become a functionary for the Party. It is Colantuoni's eventual capture and imprisonment, through a devious web of events involving these various characters, which brings the book to its close.

Taddei's resourcefulness in interweaving these scattered destinies to create a picture of a whole society is well worth the American novelist's attention. Out of the seemingly meaningless interplay of happenings—sometimes predictable, perhaps always essentially predictable in the long run, but so often apparently accidental—emerges a remarkably sensitive impression of life in its wholeness. Wandering from one place to another—Rome, Palermo, Milan, Livorno — and encountering all kinds of people — an army cook and a college teacher, Communist functionaries and Fascist officials, workers in a shipyard, a cafe owner and his patrons, a couple of beggars—the novelist is a kind of underground worker whose missions carry him into the unlikeliest corners. Only when all the scattered bits of knowledge gained along the way are pieced together is his mystery solved —but the solution, when it comes, is genuinely illuminating. This is a method which grows out of the recognition that reality—the reality of our complex world—is a thing of many facets, always shifting. And Taddei employs that method with the insight of a truly dialectical thinker whose picture of the world encompasses it in all its incessant changefulness, its interrelation of forces and constantly unfolding clash of opposites.

He has not, perhaps, been as effective in his use of the method here as in *The Pine Tree and the Mole*, his first novel. *The Sowing of the Seed* seems thin in spots: often one feels that a character or a situation has been too briefly treated; and one may feel, too, that some essential phases of Taddei's subject have only been hinted at, and some even omitted. At times, bits of incident or characterization are introduced without apparent relevance. Occasionally the style itself—always restrained, tending toward understatement—seems a little too off-hand.

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But the best testimony to the effectiveness of his method is perhaps its ability, despite such shortcomings, to keep the reader's interest alive. *The Sowing of the Seed* forces itself on the consciousness with a kind of fervent insistence, the more effective because so calmly conveyed. Its qualities are possibly a little like those of the underground campaigner whom it commemorates, engaged on his difficult mission of continually challenging his adversary's alertness — for which he needs the combination of a kind of quiet, hard-headed perseverance on the one hand and a kind of fierce, quick-acting eagerness on the other. In times like ours, it may not be a bad combination.

WALTER MCELROY.

Parable

THE AERODROME, *by Rex Warner. Lippincott. $2.*

REX WARNER's story is intended to be a parable; its locale, however, is stubbornly realistic. A military airfield has been built close to an English village. In fact and in overtone, it is a situation like the invasion of the English countryside by the American Air Forces. The hangars and revetments carefully resemble cottages and hillocks, and the village itself is merely a means of camouflage, a park for amusement, an area for future expansion. The conflict is staged between these two neighboring forces: one is brisk, efficient, conscious, cruel according to plan; the other slow, sullenly resisting, capricious, kindly, the world of sin and love.

In the course of a remarkably ingenuous sub-plot: (1) the Rector tells the hero he's really a foundling, not his son; (2) the Rector confesses to God the murder of his rival twenty years ago; who, it later appears, not only did not really die, but lived on so thoroughly as to become the illicit father of two of the main characters; (3) the hero's clandestine wife turns out to be his sister, and what is equally disturbing, turns out, later, not to be; (4) a dying Squire whispers a few key words, quite mysterious at the time; (5) the hero's mistress, loose at first, straightens out all right, due to getting a baby, though later, naturally, she pays by dying in an auto wreck.

This sounds straight out of *True Confessions*, though its real sources, I suspect, are the lurid incidents of early silents, both American and European, in which humble people are always getting upset because they don't know, from reel to reel, who their fathers are under all that prosperous beard. In modern movies, of course, we see all this much simplified, and the only problem left for the hero is to discover who *he* is.

Most of these events sound ridiculously dreadful, but they take on a curious unimportance in the novel. They are dwarfed by the shadow of the aerodrome over the village, and by a constant, terrifying duality of character that is so particularly the concern of our own generation: "In a night my feelings toward him had changed, and I asked myself whether this was due to the fact that he was not in reality my father or to the fact that he was a murderer."

Again, while the old Squire is dying and his elderly sister is stroking his face, he bites her hand suddenly and savagely, and she in turn slaps him so severely that she brings on his death. It is notable that only those of the village are described with this perversity; the airmen are simply crude, cheerful, efficient, therefore not quite human. The most ordinary pages of the novel are those concerned with the aerodrome. The most extraordinary are those concerned with the village, and these are written in the realistic tradition, and include descriptions of love-making, of the hero drunk in the mud or swimming in the river, of the smell and sound of animals at the agricultural fair. Not only the melodrama, but the parable itself, the conflict of village and aerodrome, seems minor in comparison.

The villain, the hero's real father, the Air Vice-Marshal, takes over the whole village and its surrounding land, in preparation for a plan even more grandiose. The first tragedy, Mr. Warner wants us to believe, is the eviction of the kindly Squire, owner of the village and the tenants and the profits thereof.

In this novel, the description of England's landed, idle aristocracy is always soft with nostalgia. The Squire blames himself for a worthless life, but the hero reminds him "of the successful tenants' parties which he had held, of the gifts of butter and eggs to expectant and nursing mothers, of his constant support to the cricket and football teams, the bellringers, the mummers, the boy's club—"

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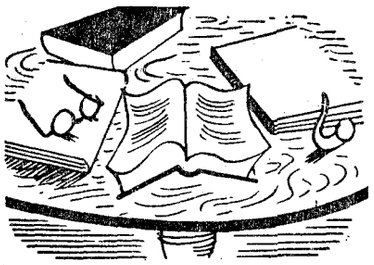

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The tragedy of the tenants is only that they have been deprived of a mystical attachment to the land, and provided with unmystical jobs at increased rates of pay. The encroachment of the aerodrome may be taken to be either fascism or socialism—such is the ambiguity and vagueness. The Air Vice-Marshal declares himself both anti-feudalist and anti-capitalist, but he is also against love and against children, for the reason that they attach his airmen to the processes of time.

Rex Warner says the Plan—and implies, by the way, that it is bad particularly because it is a plan—is based on the will of the Vice-Marshal alone. He describes its failure when the Leader crashes in a faulty plane. This is innocence indeed, the one quality which cannot be forgiven the writer of a parable. For a thoroughly realist writer can present the worst sort of people, provided he shows them accurately, because the reader can make his own judgments. But the symbolic writer must from the start make correct moral choices, for in a world of seething movements and ideas, each struggling for breath, we are constantly being offered the wrong set of alternatives. *The Aerodrome* says: either a benevolent, harsh, efficient, mechanical Plan, or a muddled, stupid, kindly village.

This false choice makes a modern novel, written with so much technical intelligence, declare itself against that very intelligence. It makes it a participant in the fashionable reactionary revolt against thinking.

THOMAS O'MEARA.

Briffaultania

NEW LIFE OF MR. MARTIN, *by Robert Briffault. Charles Scribner's Sons.* $3.

THERE is a kind of novel more common in England and on the Continent than in America in which the author collects the ideas, social figures and behavior he detests and merrily demolishes them, while slipping in occasional plugs for ideas, social figures and behavior that he likes. If *New Life of Mr. Martin* falls into any known category of novel, it is in this that it belongs.

Mr. Briffault, as he has had occasion to mention before, detests the bourgeoisie, especially the British bourgeoisie, and its cultural, sexual and moral pretensions. He hates the Nazis, right-wing Poles, Japan when it was attacking China, fusty religious thinking, the politics of the Vatican, the big-money boys with their conniving and oppression, two-bit Italian Fascists, and Franco. He likes, on the other hand, good food, socialism, London dockworkers, odds and ends of information from most of the cultures of Europe (with some Chinese and medieval Jewish and Arabic thrown in), the Soviet Union, the reason of the eighteenth century, together with its relics in the form of houses and furniture, and people who know how to enjoy themselves on whatever economic level.

To create the arguments hindering or fostering his concepts, Mr. Biffault whisks the reader into a combination of Never-Never-Land and the Europe of the Thirties. As the book opens the London dockers are already engaged in a strike against sending arms to Japan in 1929 and the strikers speak of the Nazis as though they were in power. A rather literary young man who has been working on the docks does or does not commit suicide (it may have been one or another of some international-finkish Poles) and does or does not inherit vast sums of money. In any event, a Mr. Dennis Martin appears with the vast sums and uses them to ruin British financiers, maintain large houses and numbers of mistresses (including some in Africa, where he also prevents several tribes of Arabs from joining Franco) and provide arms and dynamite for an underground of British workers opposing the course of British imperialism. While watching one sector of the revolt, Dennis Martin is shot by a stray bullet and dies—or does not—in the same pub where Anthony Whitford committed suicide. Or the whole thing may have been Whitford's dying revery in the first place.

In describing his Never-Never-Land Mr. Briffault has as many styles as a chameleon crossing a plaid rug. The garden parties with ladies are done up like a Victorian novel. A collection of workers in hiding speak as though invented by James Joyce, while at the other end of the social scale Dennis Martin's last duchess also indulges in Molly Bloomish soliloquy. The African sections are as full of the Mysterious East and half-translated Arabic as any book by Richard Halliburton and his fellows.

As a vehicle for ideas, *New Life of Mr. Martin* is hardly up to, for instance, the author's *Reasons for*

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Anger, and as a novel it is far short of *Europa*. But Mr. Briffault must have had a fine time writing the book. A number of unpleasant and dangerous ideas and people end up backed into a corner yelling "Uncle," while most of the resources of the English language snap at their heels to keep them there.

SALLY ALFORD.

Lumpenproletariat

ORPHAN PAUL, *by Maxim Gorki. Boni & Gaer.* $2.75.

GORKI had been writing for but two years when this first novel appeared serially in 1894 in one of the Nizhni-Novgorod newspapers. During this early period, the majority of his stories, like *Makar Chudra* and *Chelkash*, had glorified the life of the tramp, expressing a deep yearning for freedom.

In *Orphan Paul* Gorki turns away, for the first time, from the life of the vagabond to depict the confining existence of the proletariat in one of the Volga cities. The story concerns the efforts of a sensitive youth to find "something better" than this meager, pitiless existence. After ten years of suffering and deprivation as a shoemaker's apprentice, he falls in love with a prostitute, the first human being to show him kindness. She hasn't the strength to marry him and to cope with the struggles they would face, and she drives him away. Rather than see the only beauty he has known in this world destroyed again by the streets, he murders her.

Gorki is concerned here mostly with depicting the degradation of a certain strata of society, the *lumpenprotelariat*, under capitalism. Here we encounter Kitaeva, a childkeeper who, to save money, can without any compunction fling one of her charges into a corner to die, "hoping that nature would take its course"—then proceed to get drunk with her friends and sing bawdy songs about "double-crossers and rogues." She sends another child into the street to steal, encouraging him, "You'll become a first-class crook, Gurka." Here too is Marya, who, when the eleven-year-old Paul is left homeless, lectures him, "It'll be all right. God and good people will help you," then during the night helps her husband steal the child's last kopeck.

Yet, out of the depths to which so many of these people had been driven, something fine and noble emerges. Arefi, the misanthropic policeman who rears Paul, struggles desperately to provide him with an education; Natasha, the prostitute, refuses to ruin Paul's life by marrying him; and Paul, after destroying the woman he loves, undergoes far greater spiritual suffering than external punishment would inflict upon him.

Gorki had not yet begun to think of work as a creative collective force. Paul's search for his ideal, though this ideal was no more than the object of the simplest of human desires—a wife, a home and children—was an escape from the cruelty of his existence. Those who were not strong enough to fight for something better let themselves fall deeper into their animal-like existence.

Though there are some faults in this first work, such as a tendency on Gorki's part to romantic melodramatic effects, these are minor. What is important is Gorki's conviction of the creative potentialities of his characters.

ERNEST E. ELLIS.

Books Received

NOVELS AND STORIES BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, *selected with an introduction by V. S. Pritchett. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $3.95. An anthology of Stevenson's major novels and stories, excluding *Treasure Island*. Among them are *Kidnapped*, *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Weir of Hermiston*.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST, *by Lillian Hellman. Viking.* $2. The excellent play, now on Broadway, which takes a look at the Hubbards of *The Little Foxes*, in "another part of the forest"—namely twenty years earlier. The play was reviewed in NM, Dec. 24, 1946, by Isidor Schneider, with a further comment Jan. 7, 1947, by A. B. Magil.

CALL ME ISHMAEL, *by Charles Olson. Reynal & Hitchcock.* $2.50. A discussion of the influences of Melville's beliefs, America as geography, and of Shakespeare in the writing of *Moby Dick*.

THE NEGRO HANDBOOK, 1946-1947, *edited by Florence Murray. Current Books. A. A. Wyn.* $5.00. A manual of current facts, statistics and general information concerning the Negro in the United States. The third biennial issue, this edition includes a factual summary of the Negro's role in World War II.

PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS, *by Wilfred E. Binkley. Knopf.* $4. A revision of the author's *The Powers of the President*, brought up to date. Deals with the history of the struggle between the Presidents and

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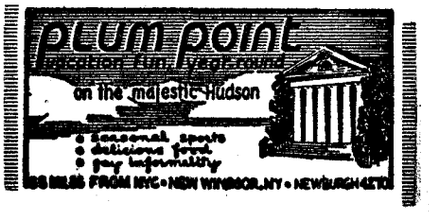

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the Congresses from Washington's time to the present.

INTRODUCING SHAKESPEARE, *by G. B. Harrison. Pelican Books.* 25¢. An excellent little book for the use of the general reader who wants to know something about Shakespeare, his times, and the Elizabethan stage. It also details some of the problems of modern Shakespearean editing.

RUSSIA: MENACE OR PROMISE? *by Vera Micheles Dean. Holt.* $2. This book is largely made up of twenty-one questions on Russian history and policy. Many of the answers are concise and to the point. Mrs. Dean recognizes the Soviet Union's place as a great power as well as its special influence in improving human welfare. On the other hand, she charges the USSR with imperialism. Her evidence is nonsensical. She simply does not know what imperialism is. Yet the book is worth reading and has many intellegent things to say.

A RAW YOUTH, *by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Introduction by Alfred Kazin. Dial.* $2.50. The least known of Dostoevsky's novels, it contains one of his greatest character portraits, that of Versilov, who ranks with the Karamazova and with Stavrogin of *The Possessed.*

UP FRONT, *by Bill Mauldin. Bantam.* 25¢. Complete and unabridged reprint of the World War II classic. All the cartoons are included.

HISTORY IS ON OUR SIDE, *by Joseph Needham. Macmillan.* $2.75. A group of lectures, essays, addresses and letters, dated 1931-1942, by the world-famous biologist. They are somewhat uneven in quality, the best being the article "This Gist of Evolution," based upon a contribution to the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.* There is also an interesting article on "Pavlov and Lenin."

TOBACCO ROAD, *by Erskine Caldwell. Penguin Books.* 25¢.

EMERSON: THE BASIC WRITINGS, *edited by Edward C. Lindeman. Pelican Books.* 25¢. A selection of Emerson's work of greatest contemporary interest. Included are the Essays on Culture, Politics, American Civilization, Art and Criticism and Man the Reformer.

ON BROADWAY

As I have had occasion to say before, musical comedies that have had some sense have received wide and hearty attention from the public. Allan Jay Lerner, *Brigadoon's* author, preferred nonsense. His book about two American tourists in Scotland who lose their way (and one of them loses his heart) in an enchanted village is so painful that one ignores it, presuming no other function for its imbecilities than to propel the dancing and singing. So long as the dancing and singing remain the real business of the evening *Brigadoon* pleases. The songs, as rendered by David Brooks and Marion Bell to Frederick Loewe's pleasant tunes, and the dances as choreographed by Agnes de Mille and performed by James Mitchell and Lidija Franklin, were excellent. But in the second act Mr. Lerner, who does better on the lyrics than on the story, suddenly takes his feeble plot seriously. The result is bathos. With tinsel literalness, on a sopping stage, the tabloid truth is demonstrated that Love can work Miracles. In more dangerous bad taste, and with an opportunism worthy of Broadway at its worst, a witless anti-Soviet gag is interjected. Forward with Herr Acheson!

Unlike the Victor Herbert music in the *Sweethearts* revival, the Oscar Strauss music in *The Chocolate Soldier* revival holds up. So does what is left of Shaw's *Arms And The Man,* on which the book is based. And Balanchine's choreography provides graceful dancing. All this, however, does not add up to a wholly satisfactory evening. The sentimentalities and humors of the Graustark convention are not yet remote enough to acquire the charm of the antique. The corn is still too redolent. One misses the contemporary touch which will, no doubt, be corn to our descendants.

The Eagle With Two Heads, by Jean Cocteau, impressed me as the stupidest play of the year.

One of the less endearing tricks of the *avantgarde* is to become deliberately old-fashioned and raid the past, not for its treasures but for its rubbish. This is what Cocteau has done. He has gone back to nicolodeon melodrama which he has pieced out with current psychological banalities. Tallulah Bankhead's rendering of the matter was a credit chiefly to her endurance, since she had most of it to deliver. There was nothing in her performance to give the play sense or grace, though Cocteau's pretentious drivel had made such a thing practically impossible.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

ART

One of our most forceful and original painters, Ben-Zion, continues to blend an earthy folk flavor with an exuberantly patterned expressionism. "Nocturne I," a farmyard scene with pump, trees and jumping-jack stars, is full of a deep, ringing poetry, and his "Rooster" combines rustic fantasy with brilliant color. "Girl in the Mirror" is one of his most lyrical inventions, while the portraits of "The Poet and Saint" belong to the realm of Ben-Zion's Old Testament parables. The latter is his most ambitious and evocative work in the show. He also has a grim satire called "Wall Street," showing some lovely stalks of wheat crushed in a vise against a background of stock-level charts. It is altogether a most rewarding exhibition. (At the Bertha Schaefer through April 19.)

It is interesting to see the first one-man show in many years of the noted abstractionist, Balcomb Greene. Greene, in my opinion, has been one of the very few painters who have made any real contribution to non-objective design in this country. Recently he has been letting the world move in on him. It is a weird, satiric, splintery sort of world but full of the painter's remarkable command of space and design. "Heirloom Man" and "Portrait" are excellent satires. Some of the paintings suffer from an overdry and brittle quality, but on the whole his fantastic creatures have greatly animated this painter's once static universe. A picture called "Exhibition" was my favorite. It is a curiously modern parallel to the suave wit

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and design of a Lautrec poster. (At the New Art Circle through April 12.)

The teaching of abstract design, space determinism, etc., with which Hans Hofmann has been occupied for years, while of undoubted formative value for students, seems to have proved a snag for the teacher himself. He has tried to free himself from his own confined set of principles through a vehement emotionalism, thus reversing his own rationale of organized space by an attempt at "automatic" or spontaneous creativity. As a result he flounders about like a fish out of water. The pictures gasp for unity and substance. (At the Betty Parsons through April 12.)

One of our top-flight romantics, Joseph De Martini, has always suffused his work with a warm love for nature. Quarries, cliffs and sea are to him, like to the early Chinese artists, the "larger" universe, though the dark drama lurking behind his hills betrays the inherent conflict of modern man. "Nightfall" is one of the finest canvases this painter has shown, the stark simplicity of the forms intensifying the spirit of the quiet village. There is an amply-designed and well-realized "Interior with Figures" which should encourage the artist to deal further with such intimately human subjects. (At the Macbeth through April 12.)

Mention should be made of a very stimulating exhibition called "Painting Under 25" at the Jacques Seligmann Gallery. It is a credit to a lot of new talent.

JOSEPH SOLMAN.

RECORDS

THE concerto, as it existed in the nineteenth century, was an attempt to continue the heroic grandeur and joy of life that Beethoven had brought to the concert hall. But Beethoven had been celebrating middle-class victories against feudalism, to audiences proud that they were taking music away from the aristocratic salon. Later composers found a more reactionary spirit in the concert hall, among newly-rich who tried to ape the aristocracy and feared further democracy. And to please them the new concerto form developed, an imitation symphony with a fat part for the solo instrument and a glittering display of the soloist's temperament replacing the need for a meaningful musical design.

Such a work is the Chopin F Minor Concerto, Op. 21, full of charming melodies, beautifully written for the piano, but without much interesting development. The performance by Arthur Rubinstein and the NBC Orchestra under William Steinberg is excellent musically and technically. The "Berceuse" fills in the odd side (Victor M 1012).

The contemporary Soviet Armenian composer Aram Khatchaturian slips somewhat into the same thin idology in his concerto for piano and orchestra. He tosses about piano and orchestral sonorities like a young man's wild oats. He is a gifted composer, however, and there are many fine, moving sections, due to his fresh idiom, an example of the new musical lodes which Soviet composers are exploring. The young pianist William Kapell is a little cold to its folk qualities but gives it a fiery and technically masterful performance with the Boston Orchestra under Koussevitzky (Victor M 1084). The recording is excellent.

The Brahms D Minor piano concerto, Op. 15, is, however, another story, one of the century's bravest attempts to solve the concerto problem on a meaningful musical basis. Although the piano has a most difficult part, it is never used for flashy display, but rather to add an intimacy and individual voice to the music that Brahms genuinely felt. An early work, it is one of Brahms' very greatest, with an inner strife, boldness of speech, feeling without sentimentality, that he was rarely to capture again. The performance is by two fine analytical minds and master musicians, Rudolf Serkin, pianist, and Fritz Reiner, conducting the Pittsburgh symphony. The recording is clear but favors the piano (Columbia M 652).

A Soviet recording of the Tschaikowsky violin concerto, by David Oistrakh and the Moscow Philharmonic conducted by Gauk, is the best performance of this familiar work I have ever heard. Instead of treating the work as a collection of sweet melodies separated by fancy technical passages, Oistrakh treats every measure with the gravity and musical phrasing he would give to Beethoven. The music as a result rises greatly in stature, and such a performance gives us a clue to the special regard that Soviet composers have for Tschaikowsky. The recording is good, the surfaces fair (Compass C 201).

S. FINKELSTEIN.

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